



IN THE TABLOID  
**SUZANNE MORRIS  
WHEN DAD IS  
BORN A WOMAN**



## Now it's a fight to the death

### Blair warns Labour as lead slips

'The election will be the last fought on ideology and politics as well' - Tony Blair yesterday

Anthony Bevis  
Political Editor

Tony Blair last night presented the voters with the "nightmare" prospect of a fifth-term Tory government, as one opinion poll showed Labour's lead slipping into single figures - reinforcing this week's *Independent* constituency survey findings that the election was still wide open.

Repeating the message of Monday's Labour Party election broadcast, the Labour leader said during a visit to Luton: "You can wake up on May 2 to another five years of the most discredited, sleazy government, or you can wake up to a fresh start under a new Labour government."

Reacting to the narrowing of one poll, by ICM for the *Guardian* newspaper, while another by Gallup for the *Daily Telegraph* confusingly showed Labour's lead over the Conservatives widening to 21 points - an increase of five points since last week - Labour strategists decided to unleash the dire warning of the consequences of more than 20 years of one-party rule.

Labour is warning that if the Tories are re-elected for a fifth term, the voters can expect them to slap value-added tax on food, to sell off of old people's homes, and to abolish the state pension.

"This is the fifth-term Tory threat from a re-elected Conservative government and every voter should hear this in mind when polling day comes on Thursday next week," the Labour Party's campaign manager Peter Mandelson, said earlier.

But the frighteners were also being applied by the Conservatives, too, as both main parties entered the final stages of a do-



Dire warning: As the ICM poll showed Labour's support slipping, Tony Blair reminds voters they could wake up on 2 May to five more 'sleazy' Tory years

Photograph: Ian Wakle/Reuters

ordie campaign that will see the losing party - whether Conservative or Labour - become embroiled in internal power struggles and bitter left-right re-orientation.

In a Conservative election broadcast that was transmitted last night, Labour was depicted as a party that has severed all its roots in its search for power.

The party was shown as a tree without roots - unable to stand up to the first puff of wind. As workmen unsuccessfully

try to keep the tree upright, a commentator says: "A tree without roots cannot withstand the slightest pressure. A party without roots doesn't stand for anything and, doesn't stand for long."

"Cutting off your roots and ditching your principles may make you look electable, but it's very dangerous in government."

But Mr Blair yesterday said he had been "squeezed" between forces that complained Labour was "principled but entirely unelectable" or electable

but unprincipled. Presenting the possibility of an end of ideological politics, Mr Blair said at a London Press Club awards

lunch that next week's election was not just the last one of the 20th century, but probably, also, the last election to be fought on

the basis of ideology and politics as well.

The Labour leader said that during the late 1960s Labour had "got stuck in dogma, and outdated ideology... from which we spent the next quarter of a century escaping."

He said that the simplest way to explain what had happened was to put it in personal terms.

"In a sense, I am a modern man," he said. "I am somebody of my own generation, a generation that's grown up without

the tags of easy political simplicities of left and right."

The battles between public and private sectors, between the state and the market, between privatisation and nationalisation, were things of the past.

"There's nothing unprincipled about saying that. That is the honest truth about the nature of the modern world," Mr Blair said.

"New Labour is true to its values, but applies those values in a different way to today's world, that is, in fact, where British poli-

tics needs to be." While insisting that he shared the same basic values as Labour leaders of the past such as Keir Hardie, Clement Attlee and Harold Wilson, he said he had "liberated" Labour from the old prescriptions.

Mr Blair said: "The problem is that our opponents would say, and people say, if you don't stand for the past, you stand for nothing. That is the nonsense that is at the heart of the campaign against us."

He said that the elections of the future would be fought on a completely different basis. But that did not mean that there would be no battlegrounds.

"The issues of isolationism versus internationalism will be a critical dividing line. The whole question of the idea of society versus a narrow form of individualism, how we reform the welfare state..."

"The differences will be there, and they will be real, but they won't be in the same way debated and argued about as they have been."

John Major, campaigning in Scotland, said he believed "the whole United Kingdom is immensely stronger because Scotland is part of the UK and passionately believed that is where it should remain for the future." The Prime Minister said he believed in the Union was a matter of principle, whether or not there were a majority of non-Tory MPs north of the border.

"If we were going to go down the devolution route, and I understand the proud aspirations of a proud nation... we would be heading inexorably for a conflict between an Edinburgh parliament and a Westminster parliament and independence for Scotland and the break-up of the United Kingdom as we know it."



Major faces the figures Photograph: Russell Boyce/Reuters

Crimes recorded by police			
Country	1987	1995	% increase
England and Wales	3,892,200	5,100,240	31
Austria	391,291	486,433	24
Italy	1,867,035	329,110	21
Republic of Ireland	85,358	102,484	20
France	3,170,970	3,665,320	16
Greece	303,182	329,110	9
Netherlands	1,042,120	1,124,466	8
Northern Ireland	63,860	68,808	8
Switzerland	334,017	346,834	5
Sweden	481,230	68,808	4

### QUICKLY

**Co-op break-up bid**  
The battle for control of the Co-op took a fresh turn when it emerged that the Japanese bank Nomura International had agreed to underwrite £1.2bn of debt funding to back Andrew Regan's break-up bid. Page 22

**ITV soap rows**  
A row has broken out between ITV and the Independent Television Commission over criticism of the broadcaster's reliance on soap operas and drama last year. Peter Rogers, the ITC chief executive, told ITV: "The IT has got to stop." Page 3

## Ancient Saxon tomb yields royal treasures

David Keys  
Archaeology Correspondent

In what is being acclaimed as one of the archaeological finds of the century, the site of a royal tomb containing the remains of an Anglo-Saxon king has been uncovered in the Midlands.

Academics believe the find, which includes the king's royal sword, helmet and ceremonial bowl, will shed new light on the social and economic status eo-

joyed by the large number of minor monarchs who ruled sections of England during the so-called Dark Ages, a period immortalised in the 8th century poem "Beowulf".

It is only the second time this century that such a discovery has been made. The only other example is the Anglo-Saxon king's tomb - complete with royal helmet - found in 1939 at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk.

The grave probably belonged to the ruler of a tiny kingdom

which historians suspect existed in the 6th and early 7th centuries. The tiny mini-state probably covered around 150 square miles and might have been based at two early Anglo-Saxon centres, Earsl Bartoo and Yardly Hastings in Northamptonshire.

In the latest dig, a team led by archaeologist Ian Meadows of Northamptonshire County Council unearthed a fine 90cm steel-surfaced iron sword and an iron helmet with ooze guard,

which historians suspect existed in the 6th and early 7th centuries.

The sword, a traditional indication of royalty, symbolised strength and aggression and was the emblem of the Anglo-Saxon god Frey.

Anthony Read, antiquities conservator at Leicester City Museums, said: "To find an Anglo-Saxon helmet is a find of national importance - to find an Anglo-Saxon helmet with a boar crest on it is of international significance."



Saxon crown: the helmet

THE TABLOID	Finance
Business & City . . . . .22-25	Leaders & Letters . . . . .19
Comment . . . . .19-21	Arts . . . . .6,7
Foreign News . . . . .14-17	Arts Reviews . . . . .27
Home News . . . . .2-8	Bridget Jones . . . . .3
	Fashion . . . . .8,9
	Weather . . . . .30

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# ITV is told to stop the rot of soap opera



Kavanagh QC: Drama serials dominating schedules

Paul McCann  
Media Correspondent

The Independent Television Commission yesterday criticised ITV for relying too heavily on soap operas and drama to bolster ratings, prompting a swift and furious response from the broadcaster.

Peter Rogers, the ITC chief executive, in an unexpectedly hard-hitting review of ITV's 1996 performance, said "the rot has got to stop" because of the channel's increasing use of soaps and drama serials such as *Cracker* and *Kavanagh QC* to fill its schedule.

But Nick Elliott, ITV's head

of drama, hit back at the ITC describing its conclusions as a throwback to a time when regulators got involved in the commissioning of programmes. "It is a kick in the teeth," said Mr Elliott yesterday. "Drama does very well and it seems to me that they have a problem with us doing well: that they want us to do less well. Why aren't they doing something about Channel 5 being so lacking and running old films every night at 9 o'clock?"

The ITC's concern was prompted by ITV increasing *Coronation Street* to four times a week last year and *Emmerdale* to three times a week at the expense of documentaries, arts

programmes and children's drama. It also pointed out that dramas can often run seven nights a week at 9pm.

The effect of all this drama was a fall in the channel's doc-

umentary output. The number of *Newswatch* current affairs documentaries was halved to 18 across the year and led to the average amount of documentary

programming on ITV falling from one hour a week in 1995 to 40 minutes in 1996.

Arts programmes fell from an average of 33 minutes per week to 31 and children's drama fell

require a large commitment from viewers and there is some unease about the sheer number of hours devoted to serials.

Mr Rogers said there "would be trouble" if ITV did not diversify away from its reliance on drama: "We want to see the crowding-out stop."

Comedy was also highlighted as an area of weakness for the network as a whole and the ITC asked the channel to make room for innovation even if meant pushing out popular dramas.

Much of the quality of ITV's output was praised. It liked the Jimmy McGovern drama *Hillsborough*, and other pro-



Gaby Roslin: Show was one of few black marks for C4

## There's unease about the hours being devoted to serials

## The Glenlivet family have just discovered TV: they think it's full of smut

Gerard Burke

Jim Woods, a water bailiff, was one of the strongest backers of the campaign to bring television to the remote Scottish highland village of Glenlivet. But now he is concerned about what his children are watching.

Like more than 100 of his neighbours, Mr Woods has only been able to watch television for the past four weeks - since, after several years of campaigning and fundraising, a powerful new transmitter was sited above the village.

Some have welcomed its arrival with open arms. Others, including Mr Woods, have been shocked by the programmes being beamed into their homes.

"During the first week we scanned through quite a lot and I was absolutely shocked

at what was on offer. There is far too much smut and sex, even in the early evening, and late at night it is not far off pornography," he said.

"*Blind Date*, for example, shows scantily dressed girls giggling over questions which are all about sex. This just sends out a message to children that they have to dress like tarts if they want to be noticed.

"Now the rule is that the remote control stays beside my chair and if I don't like what the girls are watching it gets switched over. We are not going to discard our family values just because we have a television."

Not everyone is suffering from culture shock. James Grant gets up every morning at six to watch the breakfast news. Often he is still tired from watching the late film on Channel 4 the previous night.



Mixed reception: The Woods family walking in the hills which until a month ago prevented television broadcasts reaching their village of Glenlivet

Photograph: Peter Jolly

The arrival of a free television from a local pensioners' charity has transformed James's life. Since his wife died nine years ago he has lived alone in a little stone cottage on the outskirts of Glenlivet, nestled among the wild moors.

"He has now become an

avid follower of a host of soap operas, quiz shows, documentaries and current affairs programmes.

"I spend a good few hours every day with the television," he said. "I don't really think about what I am going to watch. I just take it as it comes. Sometimes if there is

something good on I will stay up after midnight to watch it, but I am always up for the news first thing in the morning. The television is very good for the election. I like hearing the politicians' views and what they plan to do."

Until just one month ago James used to spend his

evenings alone playing the fiddle and the piano, but now he is too busy for this. "If the television wasn't here I'd just be counting my fingers every evening. There is not a lot to be done here once I have fed the hens and the dogs."

Jimmy Jones, 46, has not had time to watch anything

himself. But he notices his children crowding around the television at mealtimes.

"My sons watch more TV now that they can see what is happening. They have been following the snooker because they can see what colour the balls are," he said.

Chris Burns, the former

headmaster of the local primary school, is delighted that he can now be sure of seeing both legs of important European football matches.

He said that before the transmitter arrived, "you could watch the first episode of a series but you could never be sure of seeing [the] end."

# Black frost casts its shadow over Côtes du-Rhône

John Lichfield  
Paris

One week ago all seemed sleepily content in the prosperous hill villages west of Avignon where some of the cheaper brands of Côtes-du-Rhône are produced.

The vineyards, as precise and peaceful as military cemeteries, were lush with leaves. After an exceptionally warm and dry spring, the vines were three weeks ahead of their normal growth. A big 1997 harvest, and a good, strong vintage, seemed likely.

That was a week ago. Two days later the overnight temperature across a crescent-shaped swathe of the French south, from the Rhône valley to Provence, fell to between four and seven degrees below freezing.

It was not an especially late frost but it was an especially severe one. Severe enough to devastate thousands of hectares of vines and fruit trees. The locals call it a "black frost": intense cold, followed by bright sunshine, which turns the growing shoots of the vines to powder. Up to six million

bottles of wine may have been wiped out.

The southern part of the Côtes-du-Rhône "appellation contrôlée" area has been especially badly stricken. One village, Suze-la-Rousse, has lost 95 per cent of this year's crop. In the Gard département 40 per cent of the vines have been damaged beyond recovery until next year.

Paul Giraudon, mayor of Cavillargues, in the Gard, said: "It's a disaster. We have seen nothing of the kind for 50 years. Some of our Côtes-du-Rhône will recover, but the vin

ordinaire is 80 or 90 per cent gone. And the fruit trees are dramatically affected."

Further south and east, around Toulon, the toll is almost as great: an 80 per cent loss of the table wine crop, 20 per cent losses of vegetables and fruits, especially apricots and strawberries.

The better known, and more expensive, varieties of Côtes-du-Rhône, nearer the river valley itself, such as Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Crozes-Hermitage have also been damaged, but not as badly as in the hill villages.

Since a similar late frost in 1991, producers of the more costly types of wine have invested in very expensive heating systems to prevent the ground temperature from falling below minus 2C, the critical point for the growing shoots.

Although the extent of the devastation may not be as great as first feared, farmers' organisations in the south are saying it is the worst calamity since May 1945. They are already preparing their claims for government, and EU, compensation.

The great freeze of 1991 caused enormous disruptions to the wine market, sending prices zooming, then falling. As a result, strategic stocks have been created to even out the effect of future shortages. The impact on shop prices may, therefore, be slight. But the income of the smaller producers - even with compensation - will take a severe hit in about two years' time.

And the worst may not yet be over. Meteorologists were forecasting another severe frost in the French south east in the course of last night.



Fine wine: 95 per cent of the crop has been destroyed

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## news

# Bridgewater appeal is told of forged evidence

Patricia Wynn Davies  
Legal Affairs Editor

A falsified statement in the 1978 Carl Bridgewater murder investigation was almost certainly the work of police officers, an expert Crown witness conceded yesterday in the Court of Appeal.

Dr Robert Hardcastle, an expert in document analysis, also agreed that a purported confession extracted from the late Patrick Molloy would have had to be recorded at an unusually high speed if the timings on the document were accurate.

The developments came on the second day of the appeal on behalf of the Bridgewater Four against their 1979 convictions for the killing of the 13-year-old, newspaper delivery boy which were based largely on the Molloy "confession".

Michael Mansfield QC, counsel for Mr Molloy, told Lord Justice Roch and Mr Justice Hidden and Mitchell that Regional Crime Squad detectives had not given a true version of how the crucial confession statement had been obtained and that Mr Molloy, a "victim of oppressive questioning by the police which finally broke his will", had been denied access to a

lawyer until after he was charged with murder.

James Robinson, 63, and cousins Michael Hickey, 35, and Vincent Hickey, 42, are on unconditional bail after an 18-year campaign to clear their names but want their convictions formally quashed by the Court of Appeal.

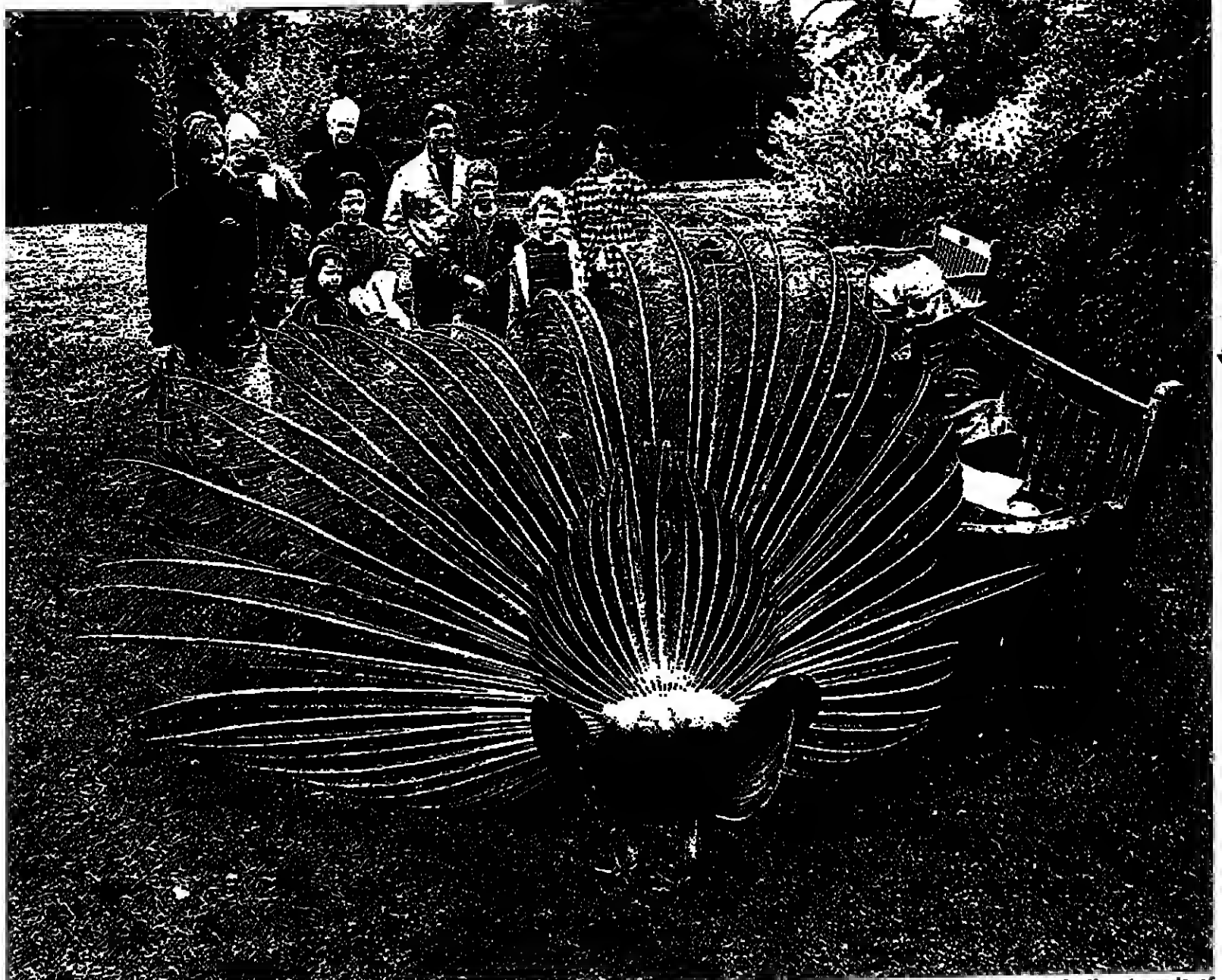
Dr Hardcastle, who was consulted by Merseyside police during earlier inquiries into the case and called as a Crown witness yesterday, was questioned over an electro-static deposition analysis (Esa) test he had conducted in relation to the statement purportedly from Vincent Hickey which Mr Mansfield claims police used as part of a deliberate strategy to provoke Mr Molloy into confessing. The test, which shows up indentations of writing, revealed that the statement had been written on paper resting immediately on top of the "confession", the crucial exhibit 54 in the 1979 trial.

Dr Hardcastle said after checking the handwriting of a number of officers, that the writing of Det Con Graham Leeke on the portion of the statement that had been preserved was the closest to the indentations on exhibit 54. Asked by Mr Mans-

field whether he agreed with Robert Radley, the independent expert called by the appellants, that the evidence was consistent with it having been written by DC Leeke, Dr Hardcastle replied: "Yes". He also said the signature in the impressions was different from Vincent Hickey's and, again agreeing with Mr Radley's evidence, said the writing of Det Con John Perkins was closest.

According to the officers' version of events, Mr Molloy made the confession during an interview with DCs Perkins and Leeke between 3.40 and 4pm on 19 December 1978, with Det Sgt John Robbins taking notes. The confession was then dictated, written, signed and read back between 4pm and 4.20pm.

Dr Hardcastle told the court that he had researched the speed at which writing could be made during police interviews, and had found variations from 44 to 155 characters per minute. If the timings in police records were accurate the statement from Mr Molloy would have to be recorded at 170 characters a minute but this, Mr Mansfield told the court, took no account of the fact that Mr Molloy was a slow speaker and pauses. The appeal continues.



Hide and seek: A curious crowd of onlookers gather to watch as a peacock appears to show off its magnificent plumage in the grounds of Kew Gardens in west London. But the grand display hides another bird cheekily taking food from a visitor. Photograph: Charles Milligan

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## Famine has its chips with suicidal potato

Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

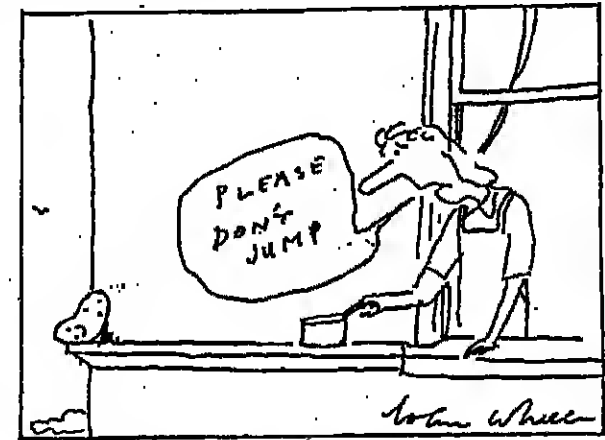
Potatoes could soon have an effective defence mechanism against the fungus which caused the Irish famine 150 years ago: self-destruction.

Scientists at the Plant Breeding Institute in Cologne, Germany, are using genetic engineering to give potato plants a "suicide pill" which would be activated when they are infected by the parasitic fungus *phytophthora infestans*, better known to farmers as Late Blight.

The result would be that although parts of the plant - possibly including some or all of its potatoes - would die, the infection would be contained.

Late Blight is a huge problem for farmers, causing an estimated £100 crop loss annually and affecting 20 per cent of the world crop. It is also maturing into more aggressive forms, which are being spread internationally by imports to countries which suffer underproduction due to drought.

The new technique adds a gene that produces the enzyme barnase, which is a potent destroyer of essential nucleic acids



within cells. "It's lethal if it's inside a cell," said Professor Alan Ferstl, of the Cambridge Centre for Protein Engineering. "In nature, there's usually an inhibitor called barnase which prevents it functioning."

Barnase is normally produced by a plant bacterium, which uses it to gather nucleic acid constituents from plants it infects, so that it can reproduce. But the Cologne team is adding the gene for the enzyme to strains of potato plants. Normally, when a plant is infected by the Late Blight fungus it starts to fight back in a limited

form. The altered plants produce barnase in the cells of affected leaves, killing off those cells and effectively isolating the fungus. However, when used in food and other products they would be indistinguishable from standard potatoes.

"It's really rather clever," said Professor Ferstl. "It's like apoptosis, the process of programmed cell death that you get in a normal cell when its DNA is damaged."

Trials of the transgenic potatoes are now under way in Germany, where they are scheduled to last until 1999.

## Haughey's 'tea and cash'

Alan Murdoch  
Dublin

Supermarket magnate Ben Dunne dropped in for a cup of tea with former Irish prime minister Charles Haughey after a game of golf, handed him three bank drafts worth £210,000 made out in fictitious names and said "Here's something for yourself," the payments to politicians inquiry in Dublin was told yesterday.

Mr Haughey had replied "Thanks, big fella," the businessman recalled during questioning at the second day of hearings at the judicial tribunal.

The exchange took place at the Taoiseach's Kinsealy mansion late in 1991. Dunne said he had the drafts from an Isle of Man bank with him in his pocket for "personal use," possibly a family matter.

"I was playing golf in Ballyrath and was very conscious of (the drafts)," Mr Dunne said. "Later I rang Charlie Haughey and said: 'I would like to drop in for a cup of tea with you'."

"At Kinsealy I got the impression that he was just not himself," Dunne recalled. The Taoiseach had seemed very depressed. "Under no circumstances did Mr Haughey ask (for money) or in any way say 'times are rough,' nothing like that," he said.

£200,000 in 1989 and 1990.

Mr Dunne said he was told Mr Haughey's debts were £700,000, but assumed his aid would reach £1m.

Mr Haughey, who has declined to be legally represented at the tribunal, has denied receiving funds from Dunnes Stores or an associate company. The tribunal heard that when discovery was sought of his bank account details between 1987 and 1991 Mr Haughey provided only

his wife's building society account book and correspondence with Dunnes Stores solicitors in which he also rejected the claims.

Mr Dunne agreed with counsel for the tribunal, Michael Collins, that Mr Haughey never intervened on his or his family's behalf with any state body.

Earlier it was revealed that Mr Dunne's informal generosity had helped several parties, including Taoiseach John Bruton's Fine Gael party.

### DAILY POEM

#### The End of Fear

By Ruth Pitter

When a man has cast out fear  
All is indifferent, and dear.

When desire has fled away  
Then the little mice can play.

Leaning against the cedar's bark,  
Or on a bear's neck in the dark,

Or lying in the mighty grass,  
He is saved from what he was.

He ran lay his head upon  
Another's bosom, or a stone,

And the stone is well beloved,  
And the breast by love unmoved:

The flesh uncured and the stone blest,  
The breast a stone, the stone a breast.

Today's poem, from the anthology *Earth Ascending* (£9.50, post-free, from Stride Publications at 11 Sylvan Road, Exeter, Devon EX4 6EW), is by the first woman to win the Queen's Gold Medal for Poetry, in 1955. Ruth Pitter died, aged 93, in 1990; her collected poems are published by Enitharmon.

مكتبة من الأصل



# Man who was born a woman loses fight to become a father

Michael Streeter

Campaigners for equal rights for transsexuals suffered a double blow yesterday after European judges rejected a lecturer's claim to be recognised as the father of his partner's children.

The European Court of Human Rights backed the United Kingdom's right not to regard Stephen Whittle as a father - even though he had been in a stable relationship with the mother of the four children for eight years - because he had been born a woman.

After the ruling, a disappointed Dr Whittle, from Manchester, held out the hope that a Labour government would amend the law, telling BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme: "They (Labour) have offered a pledge to take the matter on board... I'm sure we will see some change in the law."

However, within hours of the decision a Labour spokeswoman told *The Independent*: "We have no plans to change the law in this area at all."

Campaigners saw this as a rebuff by the party - possibly dictated by electoral concerns - following "private" assurances in the past it would be sympathetic to their claims, and the party's support for a Private Member's Bill on the subject last year.

However Dr Whittle, who underwent surgery 20 years ago,

said the pressure of litigation would continue, even though his own case had reached the end of the legal line.

"More and more people are going to be pursuing cases to the court demanding ultimate recognition. I am sure it will come in time," he said.

Later this year the Court is to hear an application by two other British transsexuals to be able to amend their birth certificates to reflect their change of sex. Yesterday's ruling in Strasbourg surprised some ob-

vention signatories and would allow the British Government a "wide margin" on interpreting the law.

It accepted the Government's view that while transsexuals can alter documents like passports and driving licences to reflect sex changes, birth certificates record the gender at birth and cannot be altered by subsequent events.

Dr Whittle pointed out this also stopped him adopting the children, who were conceived by donor insemination.

fare officer would have more say over who the children lived with than I would.

He added: "I think as far as transsexuals in the UK are concerned there really is an intractable situation in relation to other transsexuals in Europe."

His partner, Sarah Rutherford, said: "I'm very angry. It's like a public denial of our relationship."

The case had been brought in the names of Dr Whittle, Ms Rutherford and their eldest daughter - known as X, Y and Z in the hearings - claiming the British Government's refusal to recognise his status as a father broke Article 8 of the Convention. The article guarantees respect for a person's "private and family life". The pressure group Press for Change, co-founded by Dr Whittle, said the ruling was a setback but was by no means the end of their efforts.

A spokeswoman, Christine Burns, said: "We will fight on and win one way or another - even if we take our entire lives."

Jonathan Cooper, legal director of Liberty, the former National Council for Civil Liberties, said: "[Dr] Whittle is a loving father and to deny him this legal recognition is a bitter blow. Mr Cooper added that a number of cases were in the pipeline. "It will only be a matter of time for the rights of transsexuals to be recognised," he said.

“If my partner died, I would have no rights to the children”

servers because the court had, unusually, gone against the majority opinion of the Human Rights Commission, which advises the court. One campaigner said she was "in a state of shock" over the verdict and was now much less optimistic about the pending case.

The ruling also appears to conflict in spirit with a ruling last year by the separate European Court of Justice in Luxembourg, part of the European Union, which equated discrimination against transsexuals with sex discrimination. The Strasbourg court said there was a lack of agreement between Co-

Adoption required him to be married to his partner Sarah, which was not legally possible, he said. It meant that the four children - who have all been born since the start of the relationship and call him Daddy - had no father in the eyes of the law.

Dr Whittle said the situation meant he could not obtain information about his children from their schools or authorise medical treatment. "And if my partner, Sarah, died, I would have no automatic right to bring up the children."

"I find it very difficult to cope with the fact that a court wel-



Family man: Dr Whittle and his partner Sarah are determined to win the right to call him 'daddy' Photograph: NTI

## Scientists change down to produce world's tiniest gearshaft

Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

This will be the smallest gearshaft in the world, a billionth of a metre across and able to revolve 100 billion times per second, as envisaged by scientists at the US space agency Nasa.

The molecule-sized gearshaft, shown here in a computer simulation, consists of a cylinder of car-

bon atoms known as a "nanotube", with individual atoms of the organic molecule benzene attached to the side to form gear teeth. It is one of the first suggested practical uses for nanotubes, whose structure was first suggested by Sir Harold Kroto, the Nobel Prize for Chemistry.

The Nasa scientists at the Ames research centre in Mountain View, California, have not yet built the

nanogear system. But they are increasingly confident that they could be constructed and form part of miniature self-repairing machines.

The idea is part of the growing field of nanotechnology, which uses structures at the molecular scale to build tiny, efficient machines.

"One practical use of nanotechnology would be to build a 'matter compiler'," said Creon Levit, one

of the Nasa team. "We would give this machine, made of nano-parts, some raw materials, like natural gas for example."

A computer program would specify an arrangement of atoms and the matter compiler would arrange the atoms from the raw material to make a macro-scale machine or parts.

Nanotechnology is expected to become a worldwide industry worth

billions of pounds once scientists break through the problems of precise manufacture.

Though it may take decades, they expect to be able eventually to produce self-repairing machines that could, for example, be injected into the blood to seek out and clean away harmful fat deposits.

Al Globus, one of the team working at the Ames centre, said "A step along the way to making an

aerospace 'matter compiler' is an even smaller hypothetical machine - the assembler/replicator."

"It can make a copy of itself from raw materials, just as a living cell can duplicate itself."

"Then we would write computer programs to make aerospace materials, parts and machines at atomic levels of detail. They would have tremendous strength and thermal properties."

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## news

# Gays prepare secret survey of the clergy

Clare Garner

Gay activists in the Church of England are to carry out a secret survey of Anglican clergy in order to pile further pressure onto the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, to abolish the Church's ban on ordaining practising homosexuals.

In a letter sent out today to 1,000 supporters, the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM) is urging gay and lesbian clergy to sign a confidential statement if they have been ordained or employed by a bishop who knew they were not celibate.

According to the Rev Richard Kirker, general secretary of LGCM, it is an "open secret" that many bishops who signed Issues in Human Sexuality in 1991, which includes the "no gay relationship" rule for clergy, have in fact knowingly ordained and employed clergy in same-sex relationships.

"We believe that this may well

be the case with the majority of bishops," writes Mr Kirker. "It is crucial that the hypocrisy behind this position is exposed, and that the bishops stop victimising in public the clergy whom in private they have professed to support."

Mr Kirker assures respondents, who may or may not be members of LGCM, that their statements will be kept "in the strictest confidence". The purpose of the initiative is, he says, to "get a proper debate off the ground" at the General Synod in York in July, rather than publicly expose individual bishops.

The survey follows the bombshell dropped by Rt Rev John Baker, the former Bishop of Salisbury, at a lecture entitled "Homosexuality and Christian ethics - a new way forward together" on Monday. Bishop Baker, who chaired the group which produced the celibate rule for gay clergy, announced that he now feels "obliged to dis-



John Baker: Dissent

sent from that judgment".

"I cannot see that married heterosexual clergy have a right to deny their homosexual brothers and sisters the potential spiritual blessing of a sexual relationship when they themselves enjoy that blessing," he said.

The results of the survey could provide the gay rights lobby with ammunition against Dr Carey, who only last Sunday reiterated his traditional stance. "Practising

homosexuality is not to be condoned in the priesthood," he said. "We recognise two lifestyles. One is marriage and the other is celibacy and there can't be anything in between."

The Bishop of Oxford, the Rt Rev Richard Harries, who chairs the House of Bishops' group, yesterday described Dr Baker's lecture advocating "gay marriage" as "a thoughtful contribution to a continuing discussion in the church".

Mr Kirker has also written to the Archbishop of Canterbury to request a dialogue. "The rising degree of frustration among many within the Church towards your attitude is beginning to lead many to the conclusion that your refusal to meet has more to do with being obdurate than with a genuine desire to learn and listen," he wrote.

"If you wish to be believed when you say that you are not homophobic you must provide real evidence for this claim."



Tanker's makeover: A worker at the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast finishing repairs to the Sea Spirit, renamed from Sea Empress after it was damaged when it went aground off Milford Haven, Dyfed, in February 1996. Photograph: Reuters

## Father wins court review for son bullied at school

Judith Judd  
Education Editor

A father yesterday won permission to apply to the High Court over allegations that a school "closed its mind" when his 10-year-old son was bullied.

Mr W, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was given leave to apply on his son's behalf for a judicial review of the headteacher's decision not to take disciplinary action after the boy's arm was broken in the lunch queue.

Philip Engelman, who represented the family in court, argued that letters from the head and governors showed that the school had "closed its mind" to this serious matter and the bullying that underlies it.

"There has not been a serious investigation of the underlying facts, or serious consideration of the harm actually inflicted on the applicant by other boys."

He said the head had made it clear soon after the incident that he did not believe there had been a serious assault. The boy, W, had received a spiral fracture in his arm which suggested that considerable force had been used.

His assailant had admitted: "I went and gave him a Chinese burn and he moved, then I heard it click."

A police investigation decided that the assailant might have been guilty of criminal assault but his parents, on legal advice, had refused to accept a formal caution. Police said there would be no prosecution.

In January, the governors

decided that no action would be taken against the other boy over the "accident". They said they were satisfied with the school's anti-bullying policy.

The local education authority later wrote to Mr W saying that a police investigation had not found "evidence of intent" to cause harm and no further action was proposed.

When W returned to school he had been isolated from other pupils and had not been allowed to take part in activities outside lessons.

The chairman of the govern-

**"This was serious bullying which required serious action"**

nors had written to the father saying that they would not tolerate a campaign against the good name of the school and its headteacher.

Mr Justice Forbes ruled that it was "an appropriate case" for a judicial review.

Outside court, Mr W said: "This was serious bullying which required serious action. My son is utterly shattered by what has happened. It is outrageous. On the one hand he has discovered the truth of British justice. A 10-year-old juvenile can do anything and doesn't get prosecuted and his parents are allowed to refuse a caution."

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# A woman patient is examined in a west London clinic ... a doctor in Belfast makes the diagnosis

Charles Arthur  
Science Editor

Sometimes when people arrive at Parsons Green Health Centre in south-west London, they are told that they need to be diagnosed by a doctor in Belfast. It's a problem, but one which the centre intended, because it is one of two in London experimenting with "telemedicine".

Showing the problem to the Belfast doctor is as easy as picking up a hand-held television camera and dialling a phone number. The picture is sent down a phone line to a screen in a Belfast hospital, where a doctor can study the pictures and use the phone to ask questions before making a diagnosis.

In this way, the nurses at the centre - which has no doctor on the premises - are able to make diagnoses that would otherwise involve referral to a hospital. "It's a very useful technology," said one of the nurses. Cheap, too: using the video link, on average 12 times a month, means the centre doesn't have to employ a doctor - saving about £50,000 annually.

While much has been made in the past few years about the high-technology, high-price items in medicine - such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) or Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scanners - less attention has been paid to telemedicine, which takes advantage of the falling costs of communications, computers and video and audio technology.

Yet in some ways, telemedicine could change health care more radically than the expensive scanners that attract so much attention. Both Parsons Green and South Westminster Health Centre are designed as "low intensity" centres: seriously ill patients would be sent immediately to a hospital; those with minor problems can be treated by the nurses, who can also prescribe a limited range of drugs. But some cases are harder to diagnose, which is when they use a telemedicine link to Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital.

Similar trials have linked pregnant women on the Isle of Wight with specialists at Queen Charlotte Hospital in London, who can analyse live ultrasound pictures sent over the phone line and decide whether a trip to the mainland is needed or not.

"It's got great potential," said Dr Richard Wootton, director of the Institute of Telemedicine and Telecare at Queen's University, Belfast. "It has the potential to revolutionise the way that health care is delivered. But the problem is that we don't know if it's cost-effective, in strict accounting terms."

Telemedicine has been around only for the past 10 years, because it requires both computers able to compress the video signals, and falling telecommunications costs. It began in the US, where the large distances in remote areas made it sensible to be able to make informed diagnoses so that patients would know if it was worth making the full journey for a face-to-face consultation. In 1991, there were just

under standard accounting systems it is hard to justify. "There are clear clinical benefits, in terms of getting instant referral," said Dr Wootton. "Patients feel more reassured, and it saves them the cost of travelling to the doctor for the consultation. But those are intangible benefits in accountancy terms. It might work to reduce waiting lists, but maybe by improving access to hospitals, it won't. I think nobody will know until we do it."

## Telemedicine has the potential to revolutionise health care

four full-scale telemedicine programmes in the US; by 1996, there were 110.

The UK has been catching up rapidly. Later this week, a conference will take place in London to discuss the possibilities of "telepathology" - in which specialists would be able to study samples taken from patients without physically being present. Other studies may produce "teledermatology" - remote study of skin problems - and even telesurgery. The US Army has already tried the latter out, though only on a pig.

Part of the problem with telemedicine, though, is that



Screen test: Nurse practitioner Angela Burton using the telelink to Belfast to examine a patient's ulcerated ankle

Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

## Freedom of the press under fire

Kathy Marks

Lawyers for *The Independent* warned yesterday there would be grave repercussions for freedom of the press if the newspaper was found guilty of contempt of court for publishing confidential Government documents.

The documents were central to the successful appeal of four businessmen convicted of exporting arms to Iraq. They were withheld from the original trial after senior ministers signed Public Interest Immunity certificates, but disclosed on the orders of the Court of Appeal.

Fragments of two documents were reproduced in November 1995 by *The Independent* in its report on the outcome of the appeal by the men, who ran Ordifex, an arms technology firm.

The Attorney General, Sir Nicholas Lyell, has brought an action for contempt of court

against the newspaper, together with its former editor, Ian Hargreaves, and former Westminster correspondent, Chris Blackhurst, now assistant editor of the *Independent on Sunday*.

Charles Gray, QC, counsel for the newspaper, told the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Bingham, and two other judges that they would be "enlarging considerably the ambit of the law of contempt" if they found in favour of the Crown.

Earlier, Philip Havers, QC, counsel for the Attorney General, told the judges the newspaper had committed contempt when it published the documents because the Court of Appeal had given "a very clear and unambiguous" direction that they be used only "in connection with the proceedings".

The court reserved judgement yesterday, saying it would rule "within a reasonably short period".

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# Royal Ballet star dances away to a rival's tune

David Lister  
Arts News Editor

One of The Royal Ballet's brightest and most acclaimed young stars has been lured by the radical contemporary dance troupe Adventures In Motion Pictures to star in its next West End extravaganza.

Sarah Wildor, 25, dances Anastasia for The Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, London, this week, and last week won a huge ovation dancing Juliet in *Romeo And Juliet*.

But the ballerina is conspicuous by her absence in the newly-issued programme for next season. A Royal Ballet spokeswoman said yesterday that she had been given leave of absence this autumn and would be returning to the company.

It is understood that Miss Wildor has been approached by Adventures In Mo-

yet in Britain to classical ballet. As Adam Cooper found with *Swan Lake*, the public's thirst for radical new treatments of the classics led to him starring at a West End theatre then touring to Los Angeles and New York. His girlfriend will be hoping for the same sort of international fame.

When Miss Wildor, then an unknown, burst on the scene four years ago playing Juliet at Covent Garden, one critic wrote that she was "quite marvellous, the best young Juliet I have seen since the days of Lynn Seymour."

Adventures In Motion Pictures was, until *Swan Lake*, a small-scale touring company with just eight dancers. Its international success has resulted in top dancers as well as audiences becoming more open to experiment.

Richard McDermott, administrator with AMP, said yesterday: "The divisions in dance between contemporary and classical are becoming blurred particularly in Loddoo."

"You no longer have to earn your spurs with The Royal Ballet. Great dancers want to dance with contemporary companies such as ours."

Neither the Royal Ballet nor AMP would officially confirm that Miss Wildor will be moving from one company to the other temporarily. But insiders say an announcement will be made in the next few days.

The Royal Ballet is enjoying a particularly exciting time for producing star performers, and out surprisingly, some of them are beginning to want to spread their wings. If Ms Wildor, like Adam Cooper, were to decide to leave the Royal Ballet permanently it would be a blow to the company. But a company insider said yesterday: "We could not stand in Sarah's way over this and we are confident she will return. The opportunity to create a role in the West End does not come along very often."

The Royal Ballet will open its new season at the Labatts Apollo in Hamersmith, west London, this autumn when the Royal Opera House will be closed for redevelopment. The company will sign off from its Covent Garden home for two years with a gala performance in July.



Career leap: Ballerina Sarah Wildor rehearsing at the Royal Ballet. She will be dancing Cinderella with the Adventures in Motion Pictures company this autumn. Photograph: Laurie Lewis

## Pet cruelty cases double, RSPCA says

Simon Reeve

The number of people jailed for cruelty to animals last year increased by more than 100 per cent compared with 1995, according to figures released by the RSPCA yesterday.

The charity revealed at a conference in London yesterday that convictions for cruelty to dogs increased to nearly 900 while convictions for the mistreatment of cats, which have passed man's best friend as the nation's most popular pet, increased by 27 per cent.

"It is shocking that cat cruelty has risen so steeply," said Richard Davies, the RSPCA's chief officer of the inspectorate, who accused the government of "dragging its feet" over measures that would discourage people from abusing animals.

"People will do anything to them, including stabbing, kicking, punching, shooting and starving," Mr Davies said.

He added that politicians were not giving enough guidance to the judiciary to encourage them to ban cruel pet owners from keeping animals. "There needs to be a change in the law to define magistrates' power and give them the discretion of banning a cruel pet owner from keeping animals."

The RSPCA's statistics showed that 55 people received prison sentences last year for

### League of suffering

RSPCA National Cruelty Statistics for 1996

Convictions - 2,282  
Banning orders - 681  
Phone calls received - 1,303,481  
Cruelty complaints investigated - 101,751  
Rescues - 6,932  
Animal collections - 115,338  
Cruelty to cats - 235  
Cruelty to dogs - 892  
Cruelty to horses and donkeys - 126  
Cruelty to cattle - 186  
Cruelty to sheep - 168  
Cruelty to pigs - 65  
Cruelty to wildlife - 121

mistreating animals, compared with 23 in 1995. Inspectors received more than 1.3 million telephone calls from the public and investigated more than 100,000 complaints.

Poppet, a black and white collie, who hounded happily around the conference was paraded to illustrate the problem. Last year he was not expected to live after being left by his owner suffering a broken leg and burns. But a neighbour in Banbury, Oxfordshire, called the RSPCA and the owner, Norman Hobson, was convicted of cruelty and neglect.

## Keeping tags on dogs

Every dog should have a microchip inserted in the scruff of its neck, speakers will argue today at a conference in Stansted, Essex, devoted to electronic identification of pets, writes Nicholas Schoon.

The tiny devices, the size of a grain of rice, remain in the animal for life. Another device, the reader, detects the unique number in each chip from outside the dog's body.

In Britain the Kennel Club keeps a database for the 250,000 dogs which have been microchipped, giving their owners' addresses.

Less than 5 per cent of UK dogs have been microchipped to date. The devices, which cost about £20, are injected into the thin layer of fat just below the skin using a special syringe.

Animal welfare organisations have long argued for a compulsory, nationwide registration scheme for all dogs. This would reduce the number of bad, irresponsible owners and strays. They have failed to persuade government to legislate, except for particularly dangerous breeds like the pit bull.

## Great dancers want to dance with companies such as ours

tion Pictures to play Cinderella in a radical reworking of the ballet to be presented in Loddoo's West End this autumn. Last year the company staged the much praised all-male *Swan Lake* with Royal Ballet dancer Adam Cooper. It became the first full-length ballet to be staged in the West End for over 50 years, and was televised at Christmas.

Mr Cooper, who is Miss Wildor's boyfriend, has since decided to leave the Royal Ballet and tour America with the AMP's *Swan Lake*. He will play opposite her in Cinderella, which in an imaginative staging by AMP's artistic director Matthew Bourne, will be set in the Blitz.

That the modern dance company has now also managed to lure Miss Wildor is dramatic proof that contemporary dance is mounting its biggest challenge

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9

# election '97

## Leaders battle over strength in Europe

Anthony Bevin  
Political Editor

John Major and Tony Blair yesterday vied with each other for the strength of their defence of the British national interest in Europe.

The Conservative leader said Monday's speech by Jacques Santer, President of the European Commission, had vindicated his own warning of

European ambition for deeper integration, and helped to establish a distinct dividing line between Labour and the Tories.

But the Labour leader asked: "Who do you want to represent you? The man who has failed or the man who can succeed?"

Mr Major said in a prepared statement to his daily election press conference: "I say no to handing more powers to Brussels in a new employment chap-

ter. Mr Blair says yes. I say no to the extension of qualified majority voting. Mr Blair says yes. I say no to new powers for the European Parliament. Mr Blair says yes.

"On European control of foreign policy, I say no. Mr Blair says maybe, and means yes."

But Mr Blair said at his press conference: "The issue in this election campaign over Europe is very simple and it is this:

who will best stand up for and fight for British needs?"

"John Major, the man who appointed Jacques Santer, who gave us the beef war and the fiasco over BSE and can't even keep his own political party together in the course of an election campaign?"

"Or me, the person who has transformed the Labour Party into the strongest, most professional, most disciplined fighting force in British politics."

As for Mr Santer, the Labour leader said: "I disagree with a lot of what he said. Mr Santer represents the European Commission, if I am elected I will represent Britain."

But Sir Leon Brittan, the former Conservative Cabinet minister and a vice-president of the Commission, defended Mr Santer, saying that if the Euro-sceptics threw mud at the

Commission they should not be surprised if people hit back.

"In the election a large number of very harsh things have been said about the Commission," he said.

"I think the Euro-sceptics have got to have slightly thicker skins and allow themselves to be criticised because they dish it out and it is time somebody answered back."

But one of the most remarkable statements of the day came from Mr Blair in the *Sun* newspaper, in which he said: "Tomorrow is St George's Day, the day when the English celebrate the pride we have in our nation."

He said: "The Conservatives are hopelessly divided on whether Europe is the modern day dragon. Michael Howard says it is a rampaging two-headed monster, set to breathe

fire throughout our land and tear our country apart. Kenneth Clarke thinks it's like Puff the Magic Dragon - friendly, good-natured and there to help us."

The Labour leader went on: "We want a Britain strong in Europe, leading in Britain's terms... St George did not slay a dragon so that England could follow the rest. He did it so that we could be strong, and ready to lead."

## Anti-crime measures recycled

An undertaking to cut crime by 10 per cent during the five years of any future Conservative government, announced yesterday by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, is a risky, possibly brave, but ultimately meaningless gesture.

In an attempt to seize the initiative on law and order - an issue which has been surprisingly low-key during the election so far - Mr Howard outlined a five-point plan to reducing crime.

However, as opposition parties and pressure groups where quick to point out, there is nothing new in any of the Home Secretary's "initiatives". All five schemes have been well publicised and one was announced as long ago as 1995.

What is new is the unprecedented decision to set a target to cut the number of offences - standing at about 5 million in England and Wales in 1996 - by 500,000.

Mr Howard is gambling on maintaining the current drop in recorded offences, which have fallen by 10 per cent during the past four years.

His optimism is not totally unfounded, although it is almost certainly based on the assumption that the less serious crimes of burglary and car theft will drop, rather than violent offences, which are rising.

By continuing to concentrate on property crime, such as stealing cars and house break-ins, which make up 92 per cent of all recorded offences, the police could bring the total down by 10 per cent. However, there is evidence that the initial success of initiatives such as the Metropolitan Police anti-burglary Operation Bumblebee is starting to fade.

There is also the question of

how the police are going to reverse the rise in violent crime, which increased by 11 per cent last year. This included sharp rises in offences that endangered life, and sex crimes. It remains to be seen whether the introduction of a tougher sentencing policy against violent and sexual offenders will deter attackers.

Recent falls in crime have seen Labour turn its attack on the Tories' record, arguing that crime has doubled while convictions have fallen since 1979.

Paul Cavadino, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, is also critical of setting a 10 per cent target. He argued: "Recorded crime figures do not always reflect real trends. For example, they can fall because demoralised victims no longer see any point in reporting offences to the police."

"The Home Office's British Crime Survey shows that such a fall in reporting by victims accounts for part of the recent drop in recorded crime."

The assertion by Mr Howard yesterday that his plan is "entirely new" does not stand close scrutiny. His plan includes:

□ Extra funding for 5,000 more police constables in the three years to 1999. This pledge was made by John Major at the Tory conference in 1995.

□ Computerised records of fingerprints and criminal files - which is already happening - and expansion of the DNA database - the police already plan to do this, but are hampered by lack of money.

□ Pledges to give an extra £75m for more CCTV cameras, provide faster justice, action on juvenile crime and tough minimum prison sentences are all in the Tory manifesto.

Jason Bonnetto

## Falklands' future on the agenda

Colin Brown

Some suggested that the Tories might need a small foreign war to overhaul Labour's poll lead, and last night it looked as though they might have found just that.

Tory Party officials highlighted a copy of today's *Times* Defence Weekly in which it is claimed that Tony Blair had agreed to review the status of the Falklands.

"After wrapping himself in the Union Jack, it looks pretty bad," said one Tory Party official.

The newspaper reported that

Jorge Dominguez, the Argentinian Minister of Defence, had said the transfer of the Falklands to Argentina would be assured by the outcome of the election. It said Guido Di Tella, the Argentinian Foreign Minister, had met Mr Blair.

But Labour denied that Mr Blair had changed British policy or had even met Mr Di Tella. "It is utter and complete nonsense, there is not a shred of truth in the suggestion that there might be a change of policy towards the Falklands," a Labour source said.



Cross purpose: John Major is hoping to use support of the Scottish union to garner votes north of the border

Photograph: Brian Harris

## Major flags up Union danger

Colin Brown  
Chief Political Correspondent

John Major will today use his defence of the Union with Scotland to open up a second election front against Tony Blair's leadership.

Mr Major will pitch his campaign for the final seven days of the election at the heart of Labour's Scottish devolution plans, with a speech in Aberdeen warning the Scots that their offer of a Scottish parliament with tax-raising powers would lead to the break up of the UK.

Stepping up the assault on Labour, Mr Major will link the defence of the Union to the Tories' campaign against a federal Europe.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, a key player in the strategy, said: "The big message is that if Labour got into power we might lose our country through the disintegration of the UK and the surrender of power to Brussels in a way that would prove irreversible."

"That is a very important message which is undoubtedly beginning to worry the voters and will determine how many of the doubts which we are still finding will vote."

The Scottish Secretary is spearheading the Tory attack on the so-called Labour "tartan tax" to defend a Stirling seat with a majority of only 703. Mr

Major is convinced his campaign will capture the pro-Union votes for the Tories and fulfil a promise to increase the Tory tally of 10 from a total 72 seats in Scotland.

Mr Major will also use the speech to attack Mr Blair's attempts to defuse fears about increased taxes by comparing

Labour's proposed Scottish parliament to a parish council. Mr Major yesterday told voters in Perth: "The Scottish Nationalists are honest about it. They are wrong but I respect their honesty. It is more than you can say for the position of the Labour Party whatever that is."

Mr Major ridiculed the apparent U-turns by Mr Blair when he was heckled in the high street in Perth where the Tories lost a by-election to the SNP in 1995 following the death of Sir Nicholas Fairbairn, the former Scottish law officer.

A former Tory councillor, who has joined the SNP, shouted "congratulations on turning

the Tory party into an English party". Mr Major retorted the Tories would save the break-up of the UK.

That will be his central message to defend Tory seats against all the odds as he did in 1992. But the Tory strategists also believe Labour's plans are ill-thought out and Mr Blair is highly vulnerable on them.

Mr Major told voters from the platform of his campaign battle bus: "We have to raise this issue. It is an issue that rises above the normal run of politics. It is a battle that many people have not yet seen. It is a battle for the nature of the UK itself."

Mr Forsyth joined the Welsh Secretary, William Hague, in a lions' den for a photo opportunity at Blair Drummond safari park near Stirling, hoping to show their support for the British lion.

Instead of cuddly cubs, they were met by fierce animals the size of large dogs with their hackles raised. Mr Major could raise more today by staking his campaign on the Union flag on St George's Day.

If he fails, and the Tories lose the election, Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, became the latest senior Conservative to warn that the Lords may refuse to pass Labour's devolution legislation if Mr Blair fails to allow it to be taken through its committee stage line-by-line on the floor of the Commons.

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## Reaction to speech surprises Santer

As Jacques Santer, the beleaguered European Commission president, packed his bags for a quiet trip to Amsterdam on Monday, he had little idea that he would return to Brussels to find himself reviled in the British press as a "pisspatek".

Mr Santer, a well-meaning Luxembourgish, had no inkling that the dreary speech in his briefcase would cause an outbreak of unbridled euro-scepticism in the general election.

For, to be sure, this was the very last thing Mr Santer had intended. The speech, entitled "A message for the Sceptics", was supposed to prove that integration was the only way to avoid European "gridlock".

Mr Santer may even have thought his timely words would actually help that nice, moderate, Mr Blair, on his path to victory. It is so secret that Mr Santer would like to see Mr Blair win on May 1st, believing him to be more favourable towards his European project.

Perhaps he also hoped that British and Europeans would be unable to comprehend his faltering English anyway.

Mr Santer must, however, have been aware that during a British election campaign his "message to euro-sceptics" would have particular resonance across the Channel. Within hours of the address, his speech was being played up in Britain as a clear sign of the new fascist threat.

Inevitably, Britain's pro-Europeans were forced on the defensive and Labour's moderate stance on integration looked shaky, to say the least.

So angry was Tony Blair about Mr Santer's "Amsterdam cock-up", as the episode is already known, that an aide called Brussels yesterday telling the president's office that he had made disastrous intervention in the British election.

It is not the first time Mr Santer and his team have revealed their astonishing ignorance of the nature of the British political scene, thereby undermining their own efforts to get their message across. Mr Santer did not even consult Sir Leon Brittan, or Neil Kinnock, the two British commissioners, who would certainly have advised against making the speech at this sensitive time.

"We had no idea that the speech would be seen this way," said a member of Mr Santer's inner circle.

"Stupid," was how some critics in Brussels described the speech. "The timing could not have been worse," said others.

Sarah Helm

## THE HURRIED VOTER'S GUIDE

### THE CAMPAIGN

Labour moved to put business back at the top of its agenda, with a promise to help entrepreneurs and to send "business ambassadors" for Britain around the globe. High-profile business-people including Anita Roddick were shown backing Labour on video at the party's morning news conference, and the party claimed Britain had fallen to number 21 in the world prosperity league.

The Conservatives concentrated on law and order, setting out a five-year plan to cut crime by 10 per cent. Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, launched a swinging attack on Labour for being "soft on crime", but also said the Tories would attack the causes of crime - half of Labour's strategy on the subject.

### KEY ARGUMENTS

Tony Blair made a speech claiming that he was simultaneously a "modern man" with a fresh set of 21st century ideas and the baton-carrier for Labour leaders down the ages including Blair, Hardie, Clement Attlee and Harold Wilson.

Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, launched an attack on Labour, the unions and Europe, saying Blair's European policy was "the pay-off to the unions for their silence before the election so that they get their power back after the election."

A Conservative election broadcast showed a party in the mood for parables. Labour, it said, was "a tree without roots" which "at the first blow from the trade unions, would cave in."

Paddy Ashdown joined the party leaders' rush to be the most patriotic. "Is it patriotism to stand by and watch as our society becomes more and more divided? As young people are forced to sleep rough on our streets? As people are left behind in poverty, without hope?"

### GOOD DAY

Long live the Queen - so says SNP leader Alex Salmond, who pointed out that the party supported the right of Elizabeth I, Queen of the Scots, to be head of state when she resided in Scotland. When absent, her role would be filled by the speaker of the national Scottish parliament. But more ominously for HM, he added the Queen should rule "until such time as the people of Scotland indicate otherwise."

After years of fighting Conservative social policy, Frank Field, Labour MP for Birkenhead and chair of the Commons Social Services Committee, found himself quoted on the election leaflet of Peter Lilley, the Secretary of State for Social Security. The leaflet quotes Mr Field as saying of Mr Lilley: "He has a very clear view of changing... the welfare state, and he is doing it very skillfully."

Scottish devolution movements can go too far even for the SNP. An Orkney Islander phoned the party leader Alex Salmond on the BBC's Election Call to ask whether he thought the islands should be independent of an independent Scotland. Mr Salmond did not like the idea, nor the suggestion that the Orkneys might even wish to affiliate to Norway. He said "the rights we claim for Scotland are those of a nation, and national self-determination".

### BAD DAY

Plaid Cymru said yesterday that the effects of the squabbling over Europe could be "devastating". Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas, the former leader of the party, said that the level of inward investment and European funding which is attracted could not be sustained, let alone increased.

Meanwhile the Green Party's principal speaker, David Taylor, is to address a meeting of Somerset County Council, to criticise the council's decision to switch money from public transport provision to a project to build a road to a quarry which is supplying gravel... for another road.

The ProLife Alliance hit the headlines yesterday when broadcasters announced that their party election broadcast, which was due to be shown tomorrow, has to be altered after it was deemed to breach taste and decency guidelines. It features shots of body parts from foetuses aborted at clinics in the United States. Bruno Quintavalle, who runs the ProLife Alliance, said last night that his party was consulting lawyers. Channel 4 also announced it was considering whether to show the PEB of the British National Party.

### HOGWASH

A speech from Tony Blair: "I am a modern man, I am someone of my generation. I am someone who is facing up to these issues in a modern way." Blair said people wanted "a party that can take this country forward and make sense of the modern world, rather than attempting to shy away from it and simply retreat backwards". He explained Labour had been liberated from "out-dated prescriptions, to allow the values to take root again in the modern world."

THE OTHER PARTIES

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### MEDIA STAR

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### ONE TO REMEMBER

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## election '97

## Ashdown pours scorn on opponents' patriot games

Barrie Clement

For the first time in the election campaign, Paddy Ashdown last night staked his claim to patriotism after encountering a rough ride on the streets of Portsmouth at the hands of the nationalist Referendum Party.

Invoking his own career as a soldier and diplomat, Mr Ashdown denounced the "phony patriotism" of the Conservatives and the "designer patriotism" of Labour.

In a rally at Eastleigh, Hampshire, he called on voters to remember the spirit of Winston Churchill who had insisted that Britain should prepare for war. "If the true patriots in

the 1930s saw the need for Britain to re-arm, the true patriots in the 1990s see the need for Britain to re-educate - to do something to improve the level of education and skill in our country."

On Europe he said the true patriot would see it - in the words of Kenneth Clarke - as a great opportunity, rather than a "lair of spiders" as characterised by John Major.

His patriotism, however, was called into question earlier by banner-waving supporters of the Referendum Party who were involved in minor scuffles with Liberal Democrat activists.

As Mr Ashdown went on a "walkabout" in Portsmouth shopping precinct, he was surrounded by representatives of the Referendum Party who attempted to hijack the proceedings. "Why won't you let the people of this country have their say?" shouted a heckler.

Eventually the Liberal Democrat leader decided that his ploy of ignoring his noisy detractors had not worked. He told them: "You are entitled to your view, but you won't win many votes by being rude." He also reminded the hecklers that his party had supported referendums on major European issues since 1991.

In his speech he derided the Tories for "wrapping up their failures in the Union Jack".

He said: "Is it patriotism to stand by and watch as our society becomes more and more divided? As young people are forced to sleep rough on our streets? As people are left behind in poverty, without hope? Is it patriotism to see our National Health Service undermined and underfunded? Is it patriotism to see our children's prospects limited because education is so undervalued?"

He said true patriotism meant restoring the traditional values of "decency, tolerance and fair play" and acting with

self-confidence abroad. The Tory drift to the right, towards "mean-minded nastiness" had left one-nation Conservatives disillusioned, depressed and in search of a new home. He urged them to emulate Emma Nicholson and Peter Thurnham, former Tory MPs who joined the Liberal Democrats.

"Nothing is more distasteful about cornered Conservatives than the way they pretend they are the only people who can stand up for Britain," he said. And as for the bulldog and Union flag, patriotism was more than "symbols": it came from the soul.



by Anonymous

So - tonight was to be another night of passion, thought the Candidate; his third of the campaign. And to be honest, he wasn't sure how much he was looking forward to it - there seemed to him to be as much danger involved as excitement. Not to mention the ever-present risk of looking ridiculous.

The whole idea had arisen from one of those meetings involving Friend Bobby and the Brothers. Brother One - the ad man - had been doing some "focus-grouping" and had brought the results to the attention of his younger sibling - Brother Two, who in turn had consulted Bobby. And this was how Bobby had explained it all.

"The voters," he said, speaking with that intimacy which most people reserve for descriptions of their spouses or children, "have got the responsible bit. No one questions that we're as tight and prudent as the sphincter on an eel. They believe all that. They have absorbed Mr Brown's message, have assessed his personality, and decided that his dying granny would have to put up a bloody good case on 100 sheets of A4 before being allowed to borrow an aspirin."

"But, there is some evidence that we're losing it with sections of the core vote and even - strangely one might think - with some of those guilt-ridden professionals who voted Tory last time, and who are now tempted to atone for their sins by paying 45p a week extra for education, health, unemployment and anything else that the Marine fancies allocating it to this week."

"Ned ...", he nodded in the direction of Brother One, "thinks that we need to do something to show that we're still a party of conviction, they feel to need we really care. There is ground to be made up in the areas of commitment and passion."

This, the Candidate had known once, meant him. At the very beginning of the campaign it had been decided that he was both the key asset and biggest potential liability for his party. He had to be leaderly, he had to suggest wisdom, exude vision and to reassure. And now he had to be passionate, a quality that did not

come easily to him. But why not? Looks, partly. He will always find it hard to smile, like the dark, waxy-looking Mr Brown. The Candidate was more (as his wife had once told him) of an English Rose type - attractive, but not dripping with sex appeal.

Another problem was that he was saddled with the need to make a whole lot of very carefully prepared speeches: speeches full of lists enumerating the seven pillars, the 10 commitments, the five pledges. He had tried to put inflections and mild arm-waving into his reading of the written texts, but within a paragraph or two he would feel it going flat again. In television reports he came over as immensely competent, but lacking in colour.

Finally, they'd sussed it. The Candidate needed to go off text altogether. He had to leave the claustrophobic comfort of the podium and his notes, and become a free-range leader, prowling the stage in *sans texte*. Left alone with his emotions and his notes he could communicate directly from his heart to the hearts of his listeners. And he would wear shirtsleeves.

There were still problems, however. Expectations had been formed by Hollywood's notions of passion: all those tears, hugs, wails and pummelled walls. What should he do with his body? With his arms? His legs? And what was he actually going to say? It was all very well speaking from the heart, but when you consulted your heart on a stuffy evening in Stevenage, what would you find there, other than an earnest desire to go home?

In Edinburgh, it had nearly not worked. He had stepped forward from the lectern with the words "I'll tell you what I believe," and the bastards in charge of the lights had made such an obvious change, that the whole thing had been in danger of looking totally rigged. He had been saved by the failure of the sound system, forcing him to reach the nether regions of the large hall with his boy's voice. It had been a triumph.

At the end, Mrs Candidate had grabbed him and kissed him. "You know," she said, "there was one moment when you put a hand on your hip and pointed to the balcony - and you looked just like John Travolta in *Saturday Night Fever*!"

6 No one questions that we're as tight... as the sphincter on an eel



On the streets: Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin doing the rounds in Mid-Ulster

Photograph: John Voos

## BRITAIN SWINGS TO THE LEFT



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## Voters dream of day when hope and history rhyme

Sinn Féin presents itself as party of peace. David McKittrick reports

Martin McGuinness of Sinn Féin canvasses in the shadow of Bellaghy bawn, a fortified farmhouse dating back three centuries. The bawn is a metaphor of possession and dispossession: the election much the same story, a modern enactment of ancient quarrels.

This is pleasant countryside with an unpleasant history. The bawn was built on a jutting rise to house Protestants, sent from England to subdue this rebellious land for English moorlands.

The records show that John Rowley and Baptist Jones were given 3,200 acres of south Londonderry countryside to hold for England during the plantation. No one here has forgotten that it was Catholic land.

Today's political equivalent is the seat of Mid-Ulster, which has a nationalist majority but which since 1983 has been held by the Rev William McCrea. Mr McCrea, a follower of the Rev Ian Paisley, is on the further shores of political loyalism: he is the extremist's extremist.

His bawn is now under assault from Mr McGuinness of Sinn Féin and from the SDLP's Denis Haughey, one of John Hume's personal aides. The contest gives an insight into the state of opinion within northern nationalism, and thus the prospects for a new peace process.

Seamus Heaney, a local man, wrote of a time when hope and history might rhyme. In Bellaghy, there is both much hope and if anything a surfeit of history, and in this election they are

inextricably entwined.

Mr McGuinness's doorstep patter reflects what are clearly the twin aspirations of nationalist voters, a new peace process and a McCrea defeat. "This is a very important election," he says to a balding man who is still blinking from the surprise of opening his door to the Sinn Féin leader.

"We're trying to use this election to do two things. First, to rebuild the peace process - we see it as a new opportunity for a peace settlement with a new British

SDLP," he says. A successful vote for Sinn Féin would make peace less likely, he argues. "I think the IRA would conclude that they can win votes without delivering peace."

Mr McCrea, meanwhile, concentrates on the defence of his parliamentary bawn. Quite a few on the Unionist side have no great love for him, but at election times they turn out in force to do their constitutional, political and tribal duty. This time his seat is in its

has since been jailed for eight years for threatening to kill a woman.

The balding man told me later: "McCrea went on a stage with Billy Wright. That's turned everybody against him." And yet many of those expressing abhorrence about Mr Wright's alleged associations with violence are gearing up to vote for Mr McGuinness, whose reputation is not that of a pacifist.

This is partly because a lot of them are republicans who support or tolerate the IRA, but also because they seem to believe Sinn Féin when it says it wants peace. Something important has changed here, as can be seen both from the Sinn Féin message, and the message they are getting back on the doorstep - a deep desire for peace.

Mr McGuinness himself says: "Everybody wants peace and everybody wants to see another ceasefire and everybody wants to see real negotiation."

Thus the McGuinness doorstep presentation is designed to reflect nationalist voters' concerns: the topping of Mr McCrea and a new ceasefire. Mr McCrea may or may not survive. But the most important thing is that Sinn Féin candidates are receiving the message that the grassroots are hoping and indeed expecting another IRA cessation after the election. This in itself is enough to keep alive the hope that peace remains a possibility, and that hope and history may yet come to rhyme.

QUOTES OF THE DAY



Compiled by Ben Summers

هكذا من الأصل



# Parties scramble to claim the mantle of youth

Labour's roll-call of twentysomething candidates put paid to Lib-Dems theme of the day

Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

Liberal Democrat claims to be the party of youth fell flat yesterday when it emerged that the title of "youngest MP" was about to fall to Labour.

The revelation sparked desperate attempts to regain the trophy by the Liberal Democrats, whose theme of the day was "Give Youth A Chance". Although the Liberal Democrats have only one under-30 in a seat they can seriously expect to win, Labour has three. The Conservatives' youngest serious hopeful is 30.

While it is still not clear who will be the youngest MP, Labour will certainly carry off the trophy. Yvette Cooper, a former *Independent* journalist, is standing for the party at the age of 25 in the safe seat of Pontefract and Castleford, while Claire Ward, at 24, might well win Watford.

The Liberal Democrats' youngest serious contender is Stephen Gallagher, 29, who takes over from the retiring Sir Russell Johnston in Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber. However, in an attempt to prove they were still the party of youth, Liberal Democrat spin doctors last night sent *The Independent* a list of all the seats where they had under-30s fighting in second place. These included Huntingdon, where the Prime Minister has a 22,000 majority.

The Conservatives do not have any policy on whether or not putting young MPs into Parliament is a good thing, a spokeswoman for the party said slightly sniffily. She suggested a handful of 33- and 34-year-olds along with one 40-year-old as the Tory representatives from the younger end of the market. Graham Brady, 30, will take over the safe seat of Altrincham and Sale from Sir Fergus Montgomery.

"It really depends what you mean by 'winnable,'" the spokeswoman said, wondering whether to include the Stafford candidate David Cameron, born in 1966. "It's a 6,000 majority."

Labour's third young contender is Lorna Fitzsimmons, 29, who is fighting the highly marginal Rochdale for the party.

Yesterday Ms Ward said she was very hopeful of winning the seat, which would give Labour a majority of 51 if it fell to the party on a uniform swing. Being the youngest MP would not be too hard a cross to bear.

Four hopeful twentysomethings who stand a good chance of winning a Westminster seat



**Claire Ward**, 24, Labour candidate for Watford. She worked as a journalist for the *Independent* before joining the party. Born in Manchester, she studied at the University of Manchester and the College of Law in London.

**Yvette Cooper**, 25, Labour candidate for Pontefract and Castleford. A former economics writer on *The Independent*, Yvette Cooper has worked for both John Smith, the former Labour leader, and Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor. Born in Inverness and brought up in Hampshire, she took a first in PPE from Balliol, Oxford, and spent a year at Harvard as well as working on Bill Clinton's election campaign in 1992.

**Stephen Gallagher**, 29, Liberal Democrat candidate for Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber. He is a former student leader at the University of Glasgow and has been a Liberal Democrat since 1995.

**Graham Brady**, 30, Tory candidate for Altrincham and Sale West. Brady, who was deputy head boy at Altrincham Grammar School, promises to defend state grammar schools as well as the non-selective schools locally. He has a law degree from Durham, and is public affairs director of a consultancy and conference business.

The bright sparks who entered the Commons at a tender age



**Bernadette Devlin**, Independent MP for Mid-Ulster from 1969-1974. Elected at 21, Bernadette Devlin (now McKelvey) remains the youngest ever woman MP. The most famous incident in her parliamentary career was her assault in the Chamber on the Home Secretary, Reginald Maudling, in the wake of the Bloody Sunday shootings.

**Stephen Dorrell**, Secretary of State for Health. Became an MP in 1979 at the age of 22, when he was elected Conservative MP for Loughborough. Elected at 21 at Uppingham School, Leicestershire, Dorrell became a journalist with BBC Highland in 1982. Has been president of the Liberal Democrats and spoke for them on health, and Europe.

**Charles Kennedy**, Liberal Democrat MP for Ross, Cromarty and Skye. Was youngest MP 1983-87 after being elected to his seat for the SDP aged 24. Son of a crofter, he was president of the Glasgow University Union, 1980-81, before becoming a journalist with BBC Highland in 1982. Has been president of the Liberal Democrats and spoke for them on health, and Europe.

**Matthew Taylor**, Liberal Democrat MP for Truro. Elected as a Liberal MP in 1987, at 24, he has been the youngest member for the past 10 years and is his party's spokesman on local government. He went to school in Truro and London and won a scholarship to Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, where he was president of the university student union.

"It's daunting, but it's also very exciting and a challenge and I would relish that as an opportunity."

"I think it's very positive for the Labour party and positive for politics that we should have more young people coming into Parliament," she said.

The Liberal Democrats' press conference yesterday was devoted to the party's policies on youth. Its

leader Paddy Ashdown, at 56 the oldest of the three main parties, said he was "infuriated" by the waste of thousands of young lives through lack of opportunity.

"The Liberal Democrat vision is to give all Britain's young people the chance to make a difference to their own lives, to their communities and to Britain as a whole," he said.

Liberal Democrats do still

have some claims to be the party of youth, though. Matthew Taylor, MP for Truro, has been the youngest MP since he was elected at the age of 24 in 1987. Before that Charles Kennedy, who was elected for the SDP in Ross, Cromarty and Skye at the age of 24 in 1983, held the title.

In 1979, the youngest MP was Stephen Dorrell, now Secretary of State for Health, who was elected at

the age of 27. The youngest-ever woman MP is Bernadette Devlin who was 21 when she was elected as Independent Unionist member for Mid-Ulster in 1969.

But no one will ever beat the record of Henry Long, who was just 15 when he was made member for Old Sarum in 1833. Under modern electoral law, no minor can sit in Parliament.



**Lorna Fitzsimmons**, 29, Labour candidate for Rochdale. A former president of the National Union of Students, Ms Fitzsimmons now works as a lobbyist. She has already been the Institute of Public Relations' "Young Communicator of the Year" and was nominated for *Cosmopolitan's* "Woman of the Year" in 1993. She finds time for leisure pursuits including hill walking and "playing the horn".

## Abortion film axed on decency grounds

Jojo Moyes

The BBC and other broadcasters have refused to screen a party election broadcast by the anti-abortion Pro-Life Alliance which features an aborted foetus, following concerns that it could breach Independent Television Commission guidelines on taste and decency.

The PLA, which is fielding 56 candidates in the election, said yesterday that it had been contacted by both the BBC and Channel 4 about the broadcast, due to be screened tomorrow.

The film was intended to include clips from a controversial American video, *Hard Truth*, which shows footage of body parts from foetuses aborted at clinics in the United States.

"After viewing with other broadcasters and careful consideration, we have decided that a sequence to the proposed

party election broadcast by the Pro-Life Alliance would be offensive under BBC guidelines and cannot be shown in the present form," the BBC said in a statement. It added that the PLA's radio broadcast would go ahead as planned today.

The director of the PLA, Bruno Quintavalle, said the organisation was consulting lawyers about the possibility of a judicial review.

He said they had been told by Channel 4 that the broadcast could only be screened after midnight and by the BBC that it could not be shown at any time or under any circumstances.

"If this film is so horrible that we are not allowed to watch it, why on earth is this laboratory going on in this country 500 times in every single day?" he said. It is planning to appeal, with the aid of the human rights organisation Liberty. Liberty's

director, John Wadham, said yesterday that although the PLA was its "political enemy" it was important to ensure that everyone had the right to express their view.

"We are acting as their lawyers on a possible challenge to the decision to ban their broadcast. Liberty has for many years been an organisation which supports women's right to choose and we remain committed to women's right to choose," Mr Wadham said.

The rules governing party election broadcasts state that if the organisation has correctly nominated 30 parliamentary candidates by 16 April, it should get a five-minute broadcast. But broadcasters are also bound by rules which say programmes should not include anything "which offends against good taste or decency or is likely to be offensive to public feeling".

Channel 4 also confirmed yesterday that it had expressed reservations about the suitability of the planned broadcast submitted by the far-right British National Party. A spokesman for the BNP said that the election broadcast was planned to go ahead on Friday.

The Conservatives' latest broadcast, shown last night, seeks to play on voters' fears that new Labour has cut itself off from its roots and can be blown in any direction, writes Fran Abrams.

Using the image of a pine tree being cut down and then propped up again alongside a more stately Conservative conifer, the broadcast used a series of newspaper headlines to show how Labour's policy had changed over the past few years. The Tory tree was a Wellingtonia, said by some sources to be similar to a Giant Redwood.

## Luton's flowers suffer from crop of reds in the bed

Luton's municipal gardeners will remember the day Tony Blair came to town long after the memory has faded in the minds of the people who booed and cheered him yesterday.

Crushed bulbs and withered stems were his legacy as those for him and those against were marshalled, shouting at each other from the raised brick flower beds that pass for street chic in Bedfordshire.

"Go on home you fat arse," was but one of the comments launched from the red flower bed as the blue corner, peopled by a band of hardy Tory women, trooped heavily through the tulips shouting: "Tory not Tony!"

Into the pedestrianised valley between them strode Mr Blair, smiling resolutely, daggers to the right of him, chanting to

Steve Boggan on the horticultural havoc wreaked by Tony Blair's visit

the left. He had just arrived on the Labour battlebus, climbed on to his red-carpeted podium and greeted Luton's shopping masses outside their town hall.

He issued the usual promises: more nurses, fewer managers; smaller class sizes; something for the elderly; something for the young; and then launched himself into the frenzied mass from a determination to govern ones country.

The Tory corner was filled with no more than five or six women holding placards, but they made enough weight to disrupt the event and demolish the flowers. "He's just a puppet of the

unions," said Barbara Jones, 31. "I don't want him to ruin the economy and I want to keep my job and be able to pay my mortgage."

"This is nothing, anyway," she added, surveying the crowd of 200 or so. "There were 10 times this many when John Major came two weeks ago."

As Mr Blair and his wife, Cherie, shook scores of hands, making almost as many friends, Ian Pringle, 31, a council worker, shook his head.

"There may have been more people," he said. "But they were booing and jeering. It was not exactly a warm reception."

The passion had manifested itself for a reason. Luton has two

constituencies, north and south, which are well within Labour's reach. In the north, Kelvin Hopkins needs to claw back a majority of 5,949 to topple Tory David Senior. In the south, Margaret Moran needs to overturn a majority of just 583 to replace Sir Graham Bright, another Conservative. And the feeling in the town centre yesterday was that they could do it.

"I'd prefer it if they didn't win," said Malcolm Garlick, 37, a flower seller. "They're moving in the right direction but they could do with another five years of learning about business. Having said all that, I think they will take both Luton seats."

The words would have warmed the cockles of Mr Blair's heart and, if he had heard them, perhaps he would have planted a few red roses in his wake.

## BRITAIN SWINGS BACK TO THE RIGHT



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# Liberty attacks marked ballots

John Rentoul

The practice of numbering ballot papers is a threat to secret voting and should be scrapped, according to Liberty, the civil liberties campaign group.

As in previous general elections, all votes cast on Thursday next week will be traceable – in theory – by matching serial numbers on the ballot form with the electoral roll numbers recorded by polling-station clerks on counterfoils.

This is to allow votes to be traced in cases of "personation", when someone votes claiming to be someone they are not. If personation is proved, the bogus vote can be retrieved and the genuine voter allowed to cast a vote instead.

But Liberty claims the procedure is a "serious threat to ballot secrecy", because state agencies could abuse vote tracing to find out who voted for parties of which they disapproved. "We have learned much in recent years about some of the more dubious activities of MI5," said a Liberty report on vote tracing.

"We now learn from the debates on the Police Bill that the police have also for decades been engaged in covert surveillance and telephone bugging without the knowledge or control of the responsible ministers," the report added.

It continued: "Can we really believe that these agencies would never attempt to find out who voted for a candidate whose views they considered subversive or dangerous, when they could do so quickly and easily, in secret, with no public controversy?"

But Liberty has clashed with the Electoral Reform Society, with which it carried out a joint inquiry into ballot secrecy, published yesterday.

The ERS concluded that vote-tracing was needed to "en-

sure the probity of the system" by enabling abuse to be identified and corrected.

But Liberty argues that vote-tracing "does not help in the detection of electoral fraud". It simply allows the result to be corrected, if personation is proved, according to its dissenting report. This would only matter if the number of fraudulent votes were greater than the winning candidate's majority.

Liberty calls for vote tracing to be abolished and admits that it would not be possible to correct an election result if fraud were proven in a close contest. "It might become necessary to re-run a constituency's election in a very few cases – once a century, perhaps – when the winner's majority is smaller than the number of personated votes. That is a small price to pay for a truly secret ballot," says the Liberty report.

Eric Syddique, director of the ERS, disagrees. "I think they are naive. The fact that the vote-tracing rules are there is a deterrent. Remove them, and over a period of time people would work out how to carry out fraud and get away with it. And if an election is a snapshot at a particular time, a re-run election may produce a very different result."

But Liberty claims that Home Office officials have admitted that the vote-tracing provisions are no longer needed, and that they cause public disquiet. It argues that voters should still be checked off the electoral register when they vote, to prevent personation, but that nothing should be written on the counterfoils of ballot forms.

Vote tracing has been controversial since it was introduced along with the secret ballot – as distinct from public voting which preceded it – in the Ballot Act of 1872.



Morning tea: Michael Howard (left) and John Humphrys relaxing yesterday before the Home Secretary's interview on Radio 4's Today programme

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## Why the politicians worry about 'Today'

Paul McCann goes into the studio and behind the scenes to find out why an early-morning radio programme sets the news agenda for the day

Nine minutes past eight yesterday morning and in the Today programme studio Gordon Brown is worried. And he's not even there.

His gravelly Scots voice is disembodied and emerging from a speaker connected by landline with the BBC's Westminster offices in Millbank. Most senior politicians prefer a face-to-face interview, with the exception of Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, who uses a radio car because he claims not to get out of bed before 8am.

"We've spent a lot of time on this economic research," says

the wall-mounted speaker to the Today editor, Jon Barton. "I'd hate to see it go unreported." The report he is talking about is an OECD survey that Labour claims shows Tory Britain tumbling down the economic performance league.

Today knows the shadow Chancellor is worried. They had Charlie Whelan, his media minder, calling up the day before trying to make sure that the

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is the lead item in Mr Brown's interview – at 10 minutes past eight with the co-presenter John Humphrys.

As it turns out he was right to be worried – in the handover meeting between Today's day and night teams the evening before, it had already been decided that Mr Brown is on to speak about Europe in the aftermath of Jacques Santer's intervention in the election.

The entire interview is composed of Mr Humphrys trying to get Mr Brown to express a Labour view on the single currency. The OECD doesn't get a mention until a later item.

It is a standard day of spin doctoring and political pressure for the nation's flagship morning news programme.

"I thought, when I joined, it would be endless harassment by Mandelson and Lewington,"

said Mr Barton, about the respective Labour and Tory party chief spin doctors. "But while we've had strong complaints about the parties it is not minute-by-minute spinning."

Mr Barton believes that the live and flexible nature of Today makes it less amenable to the spin doctor's art than television news, which deals in pre-recorded "packages" of footage.

He said: "The programme is long and can do several interviews on a subject. That way several points of view can be conveyed in one programme and they stay off our back."

He thinks the spin doctors feel there is more to be gained by trying to influence the choice of soundbite or footage used by

lunchtime news programmes because those clips can be run throughout the rest of the day, on various television news shows, creating as they go the agenda of that day.

James Naughtie, one of the Today presenters, agreed: "There is an initial feeling of an interview that means it can't be spun. Spin doctoring has become an obsession that's completely out of proportion. Most of it is by people who want to write lots of self-aggrandising books after the election."

But while Today is dismissive of politicians' attempts to manipulate its agenda, yesterday's other big political interview smelted at the very least of opportunism.

Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, was booked to come on the programme to discuss a "major crime initiative". But Mr Howard's crime proposal, when eventually revealed to a sleepy nation at nine minutes past seven, was patently not much of a story.

Mr Howard would propose a target 10 per cent cut in crime to be achieved by a lot of things that had already been

announced. "You're not introducing anything new today then," was Mr Humphrys' sceptical response to the "major crime initiative".

What is less clear is who exactly is the opportunist. The crime initiative was largely a fig-leaf for Mr Howard, a right-wing Tory leadership contender, to get on Today and bash Mr Santer. But Today was happy to have Mr Howard talking about Europe because he had disagreed with Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, at the weekend on the Amsterdam summit's implications for British sovereignty.

Two small interviews an hour apart, probably lost in the election's frenzy of nothingness, but they nicely illustrate why Mr Howard is such a feared political operator, and that Millbank's spin patrol yet have something to learn.

Michael Howard was giving Today a solid Europhobe-party-split story. Gordon Brown, in the words of John Humphrys, "wanted to come on and bash the Tories with a load of dodgy statistics".

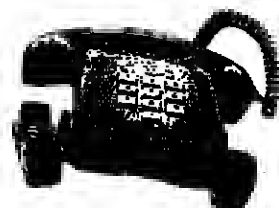
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## US writers offer no respite

Kim Sengupta

Spin doctors and soundbites, razmatazz and auto cues, personalities overshadowing policies, and two main parties with similar manifestos – American journalists feel at home covering this election.

The presidential-style campaign being waged by John Major and Tony Blair has also, perhaps, made the contest more accessible to parts of the US media. And this has led to some acerbic dissections of the characters of the two men.

Tony Blair has suffered by far the more in this, and surprisingly from a writer who may have been expected to be in sympathy with the leader of New Labour.

Joe Klein, the "Anonymous" author of the now-famous *Primary Colours*, and representing *The New Yorker*, was the sole foreign correspondent granted access to the Blair battlebus in its journey up and down Britain.

The magazine, which regards itself as the voice of sophisticated East-Coast liberalism, is edited by Tina Brown who, it has been said, covers the job of arts min-

ister in a Blair government. Her journalist and publisher husband, Harold Evans, has organised Labour fund-raising bashes in New York. But this did not prevent Mr Klein from penning some trenchant criticism: "If Bill Clinton is the ultimate salesman ... Blair at times seems the ultimate sales clerk anxiously peddling toaster ovens ..."

If Mr Blair is handicapped by his perceived similarities to Clinton, John Major suffers badly in comparison with the one modern British politician the Americans know well, Lady

Thatcher. Writing in *Newsweek*, Stryker McGuire stated that on Europe "Major has been unable to keep a couple of hundred would-be MPs in line. This raises questions about his leadership – and unfavourable comparisons with his predecessor Margaret Thatcher's toughness ..."

Time magazine ooted Labour's long march away from socialism under Mr Blair. It said: "A party once identified with red flags, brown suits, and Marxist shop stewards had already eaten its share of humble pie, if not spinach."

### HOW I WILL VOTE: SARA PARKIN

## Support goes to greenest candidate

Sara Parkin was a spokesperson for the Green Party until 1992. In 1996 she helped to found the Real World coalition, an alliance of 32 pressure groups including Oxfam and Friends of the Earth which aims to promote issues of environment and equality.

How will you vote?  
I don't yet know.

Do you have any preferences at all at the moment?  
Well, as a member of the Real World organisation, I have asked each of the candidates in my constituency to respond to each of the Real World's 12 "action points". When they respond, I will make my judgement on how to vote.

You don't see an election as a battle between Major and Blair?  
No, I want to use what limited power I have in the British electoral system to get the greenest bottoms on parliamentary seats as I can. Real World is also going to do an analysis of the

party manifestos according to those points.

Do you think that the parties have a long way to go with these issues at the moment?  
Oh, absolutely. This has to move centre stage. I have been involved in environmental campaigning for 30 years now, and all the evidence is that the rate of environmental degradation is accelerating.



Our sense of urgency is enhanced, not diminished.

You were involved in the Green Party, until you stepped down as Chair. Do you ever regret that decision?  
No, I don't. I regret that it was necessary, but I don't regret doing it. My decision on how I will vote will be for an electable candidate, and I think that's very important.

My reason for withdrawing from the Green Party was that it did not want to think strategically about how it could operate within the British electoral system. It's the ideas we want to get into the public domain, the ideas we want to get into power.

Are you optimistic that what you would term a Green government will come about before it's too late?  
Well, we've got no judgement about what is and what isn't too late. I think we've got to do something pretty swiftly, we've got to reduce our impact on the environment by about 50 per

cent within the next 30 to 40 years. I think the evidence will be delivered increasingly to governments from the environment and the impact of the degrading environment on people and on the economy which are already increasingly visible – and so governments will go green. What sort of government that is, I don't know.

In Germany, you've got the German Greens now well positioned to perhaps be in a coalition government with the Social Democrats after the next election. In some cases it will be green parties providing the vehicles, in other cases it will be either green parties or green movements being the catalyst, but one way or the other, government is going to go green. It's not a question of whether they do or not, it's when and how. I get asked by people "who shall I vote for?" I shall be encouraging everybody that does to get the Real World list and ask the candidates. These are the issues that really matter.  
Interview by Ben Summers

مكتبة من الأمل



## Howarth basks in community values



Parent power: Alan Howarth canvassing outside St Julian's school in the Newport East constituency yesterday

Photograph: Rob Stratton

### Tony Heath

Memories in Wales are long. The giant Llanwrnog steel works, one of Europe's most efficient, is at the heart of the Newport East constituency. Alan Howarth was sitting on the Tory benches at the time of the 1984 miners' dispute and Arthur Scargill was running the strike. How times change. Mr Howarth who crossed the floor to join Labour in 1995 is bearing Tony Blair's standard in this safe Labour seat. And Mr Scargill, founder of the Socialist Labour Party and scourge of New Labour, has entered the fray. Mr Howarth was selected with some ease - he triumphed on the first ballot - by party members barely a month ago after the veteran Roy Hughes stood down after 31 years as MP. Labour in Newport is neither old Labour nor new Labour, just consistent Labour firmly attached to community values. Out canvassing with a posse of supporters in the Beechwood area Mr Howarth was at ease. "I hope you'll support me on polling day," he said to Bev-

### Newport East: Scargill presence threatens to reopen old wounds

erley Price, who was waiting to collect her six-year-old twin daughters from St Julian's infant school. At another school, Alway primary, parents have clubbed together to pay the salary of Paula Hoddinott a teacher threatened with redundancy. "The Government cuts, teachers face the sack, but the community rallies round," Mr Howarth commented. A good listener, he exhibits a steady determination to win the electors' trust. He knows that there is some scepticism over his conversion. At the time he switched sides there were cries of *lunatic*, but remarkably few came from Labour in Newport. In fact, Paul Flynn, who is seeking re-election in Newport West, quickly went public with a press release praising Mr Howarth's courage. Denis Coughlin, now retired, recalls the steelmen's involvement in the miners' strike of 1984. The plant was kept in op-

eration by fleets of lorries ferrying in coal. "We did as much as we could to help. Money and so on. We even gave pickets our 'pinkies', meal chits printed on pink paper, so that they could get extra food," he remembers. "Now Scargill is just out to make trouble." For the president of the National Union of Mineworkers, already seething over the ditching of Clause Four, Mr Howarth's conversion was the last straw. "In Newport there's a choice between two Tories - the official Tory and the Labour Tory - and a genuine socialist," Mr Scargill maintains. Other memories surfaced at Usk View old people's home where 40 senior citizens were at tea. Mr Howarth listened carefully to Nellie Dale, a sprightly 90-year-old. Her childhood was a time of hope, with colliers hard at work a few miles outside the town and the docks bustling with trade. A tract on

the wall reads: "When I am an old woman I shall wear purple with a red hat." Later, as he prepared for yet another television interview, Mr Howarth remarked: "The Tories have lost touch with the decent instincts of people. Places like Usk View, where people needing help are really helped, tell another story. The community here is still attached to traditional values but it is also forward thinking." When Labour chose its oew man the Tory candidate, David Evans, claimed the seat would become marginal. The cliché has it that a week is a long time in politics, but evidence on the ground suggests the prediction is flawed. With the Liberal Democrat, Alistair Cameron Plaid Cymru's Christopher Holland, Garth Davies of the Referendum Party and Mr Scargill all on the ballot the final figures will be revealing. But with the inheritance of a 9,899 majority Mr Howarth looks safe. No chances are being taken but at the Ringland Labour Club conversation inevitably turns to the size of the majority.

## Labour rejects Scottish union 'wish lists'

Stephen Goodwin

George Robertson, Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland, yesterday tried to bury the Tory image of a Labour Party in hock to the trade unions with a blunt rejection of public spending "wish lists" paraded before this week's Scottish Trades Union Congress conference. There could be no "recess from reality", Mr Robertson told delegates to the centenary congress in Glasgow, which has backed calls for a four-day week, a national minimum wage of well over £4 an hour, re-nationalisation of the railways and further investment in industry and training. "The inescapable reality is that we cannot repair the economic damage of 18 years of failure in the first 18 weeks or even 18 months of a new Labour government," he said. Delegates gave Mr Robertson a polite reception but many were clearly irritated by the directness of his language. Sandy Boyle of the TUC

General Council said Mr Robertson had "over egged it". Nobody in the STUC was in any doubt about the relationship with the Labour Party and nothing the Congress had decided had anything to do with "fantasy", Mr Boyle said. Mr Robertson wove the courage of the pioneers of Scottish trade unionism in tackling inequalities in wealth and health with the need for moderation today. "We owe them the discipline and hard-headedness and the coolness of judgement to take their legacy on and improve and better it for generations still to come." He said Tory scaremongering would only be exposed as petty and without foundation if there was self-discipline and control. "If there is an inflation of expectations of what can be done... and if there are unreasonable and unfulfillable demands made then the beneficiaries will only be those who want to hold back the tide." Repeating the "no favours,

only fairness" theme, Mr Robertson said if a Labour government was elected it would be to eliminate the "cronyism" which had so corroded public life for the last 18 years. "There is no way we will replace their cronyism for cronyisms of any other kind." Nor could there be any magic carpet of unrealistic wish lists flying to days gone by. "STUC leaders drew comfort from Mr Robinson's reminder that although a Labour government would inherit the Tories' immediate spending totals it would not inherit their priorities or policies. A key demand at the conference was for a national minimum wage at substantially above any figure contemplated by the Labour leadership. Although a proposal from the public service workers' union Unison was dropped from the agenda a similar proposal starting at 50 per cent of median male earnings - £4.42 an hour today - rising to two-thirds of earnings slipped through.

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### AROUND THE REGIONS

## Seaside with marginal attraction

For voters in Tynemouth, rubbing shoulders with famous politicians is becoming almost commonplace. The political big guns are being wheeled out at a rate of three a week in this most marginal of constituencies. Hardly a day goes by without a Westminster star mucking in with the local butcher or shaking hands with punters on Whitley Bay seafront. Michael Portillo, Peter Lilley, William Hague and Robin Cook have all been and gone. Others of even greater standing will follow. The electorate are being left in no doubt as to how precious their vote is, by the Tories desperate to maintain a lone patch of blue in the sea of red that dominates the political map on Tyneside, and by Labour who know if they can't win seats like this they will never win power. Neville Trotter, the outgoing Tory MP, is retiring after 22 years and with him a substantial personal loyalty vote could disappear. He leaves his would-be successor Martin Callanan a

seat that has not been in Labour hands since 1950, but one with a majority that has been whittled down to a mere 597 in 1992. For the Labour candidate, Alan Campbell, the outlook, in what national polls would suggest should be a comfortable gain, has been clouded by boundary changes. The rock solid Labour Riverside ward has been removed from the battle zone and put into the North Tyneside seat. That leaves him needing to conjure a swing of 3.2 per cent - a daunting task of around 3,500 - to snatch the seat. The Tynemouth count will provide a welcome touch of drama to election night in the North-east. Our only excitement usually comes from observing whichever of the two Sunderland seats is in its traditional race to be the first in the country to declare a result. Local Tories are divided

over how the party will fare. William Storey, 62, secretary of Tynemouth Golf Club says he, like many other Conservative voters, is going through a period of soul-searching. "I have always voted Conservative, it has been an automatic thing. But now I am thinking very deeply about it," he said. "I find previously staunch Tories are disenchanted with the party. While the majority fear a Labour government, they are finding it very difficult to back Major after years and years of unquestioned support." Edna Halliday, 52, who owns an oyster shop in Whitley Bay says she and other businesswomen in the area are still experiencing a slump in trade for which the Government must take some of the blame. "I have tried all sorts to get business to pick up but I've had no help from anyone. I vote Conservative because I have worked hard all my life to

make a living. Labour have changed, but when it comes to crossing the box, people will still go with the Tories." Mr Callanan, 35, is looking for most of his votes in the affluent, white-collar, coastal wards of Whitley Bay, Monkseaton and Tynemouth. He has personally championed a campaign to create a new council for the coast by abolishing the Labour-run North Tyneside authority - a move supported by a 20,000 signature petition. Mr Campbell, 39, a father of two and a teacher, is more concerned about attracting jobs to the area which has already seen major inward investment and work for 2,000 in the form of the giant Siemens microchip plant. A poll of 500 Tynemouth voters by Market Research UK for the *Journal* at the start of the campaign suggested the Tories had slipped 22 points behind Labour into third place, with voters in every age group, class, occupation and location turning to Tony Blair. Simon Bird  
The Journal, Newcastle

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# Defector's tales fuel Seoul's paranoia

Richard Lloyd Parry  
Seoul

Since his arrival in Seoul on Sunday, South Koreans have learnt a good deal about the highest-ranking North Korean defector, Hwang Jang Yop, although it is not the kind of intelligence most had in mind.

They know what time he gets up (5am) and they know what he has for breakfast (a glass of ginseng juice). They know he has a light appetite and that he is in good health for a 74-year-old.

But apart from a few dubious leaks, and an alarming speech he gave on his arrival, they know none of the things Mr Hwang was supposed to tell them — about the workings of the North Korean regime, and its leader, Kim Jong Il.

In fact, since his defection to the South Korean consulate in Peking in February, the Hwang affair has revealed more about the paranoia and vulnerabilities of South Koreans than it has about their estranged brethren.

The latest "revelation" came yesterday, in a newspaper report about a letter from Mr Hwang allegedly passed to South Korean intelligence in August. "North Korea is capable of scorching South Korea with nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and rockets. If the United States intervenes, it plans to scorch Japan too."

The statements are in keeping with Mr Hwang's declaration on arriving in Seoul that he had come "to block war by joining hands with brothers in the south."

But this oews had little impact. First, it is unclear why Mr

Hwang would have run the risk of writing such a document and how it got to Seoul.

Secondly, as a philosopher and intellectual, it is not the kind of information to which he would have had access. Finally, the timing and content of the report makes it suspicious: at a particularly sticky moment for South Korea's own political establishment, it is just the kind of thing to distract from the problems of the government.

The Seoul administration has been badly compromised by bribery allegations involving bank loans to a recently bankrupt steel company.

But media interest in the scandal has been almost eclipsed by speculation about a mysterious list which Mr Hwang is rumoured to have brought with him.

The list is said to carry the names of prominent South Korean figures, including members of the opposition, who are in the pay of the North.

Government spokesmen deny the existence of such a list, but the rumour has been enough to provoke anxious squeals from opposition politicians about witch-hunts. For the time being, Mr Hwang is giving the South a great deal to think about, before he has spilled a single bean.

South Korean diplomats arrived back in Seoul from New York yesterday after failing to secure North Korean participation in talks on peace on the peninsula. Officials from Pyongyang refused to agree to the talks, intended to include China and the US, unless they received more aid to alleviate serious food shortages.



Earthy approach: Pauline Tranje sitting in a mock sewer at the Children's Museum in Manila during a programme on World's Earth Day yesterday. Children were given an idea of what such a structure is like, to help educate them on how to save the environment. Photograph: AP

## US imposes sanctions on Burmese junta

Mary Dejevsky  
Washington

The US yesterday said it would go it alone in imposing economic sanctions on Burma in protest at "persistent human-rights abuses" by the military government. Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, said the measure "will deal a further blow to investor confidence" in Burma.

The decision follows the frustration of US efforts to co-ordinate international sanctions. Japan and members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations in particular were reluctant to join any sanctions effort. Last week the UN Human Rights Commission passed a res-

olution expressing concern about arbitrary executions in Burma, deaths and torture of people in police custody, and forced child labour.

Burma's government has been criticised by the West ever since it refused to recognise the results of elections in 1990 that would have brought the opposition National League for Democracy to power. The co-founder and opposition leader, Aung San San Kyi, spent six years under house arrest in Rangoon and still faces restrictions. Opposition demonstrations have been violently broken up but none of these actions precipitated the sanctions, which are mostly limited to a ban on new US investment in Burma. Existing projects are not af-

fected. The US is the fourth-largest foreign investor in Burma.

The likelihood of sanctions was signalled by Ms Albright last week. The Burmese military had responded to calls for more democracy by "placing even greater limits on the right of political expression and by throwing peaceful demonstrators in jail".

"Burmese leaders are on notice," she warned, "that unless the clouds of repression are lifted, they will face investment sanctions under US law."

Ms Albright's style of direct speaking, which has recently included warnings to Iraq over its flouting of UN resolutions and to China over its treatment of Hong Kong after it takes con-

trol on 1 June, has created the impression that the human-rights question is once again becoming an important ingredient of US foreign policy.

Her words, however, are also pointing up what some critics of the administration see as a contradiction in policy.

They note that when Vice-President Al Gore visited China recently the subject of China's observance of human rights was absent and China did not feel constrained to offer concessions, as it has in the past, by freeing any political prisoners. China, say the critics, because of its size and importance to the US, is being judged by a more lenient standard than smaller, less important countries.

## Algerian rebels kill 93 in village atrocity

Algiers (AP) — An armed group massacred 93 Algerian villagers yesterday, including women and children, in the bloodiest such attack since the start of the Islamic insurgency five years ago, authorities said. The massacre was in the village of Haouch Mokfi, near Bougara, 12 miles from Algiers.

Members of a family who fled described the group as Islamic guerrillas who killed villagers because they refused to "collaborate." Armed groups depend for their survival on the aid of citizens who provide food, money and other necessities.

"We have no more to give. They've already taken everything," said a member of the family which arrived in the capital.

Village massacres around Algiers have become a prevalent form of violence since the start of the insurgency. The Haouch Mokfi massacre was the biggest single mass killing since the birth of the insurgency after the army cancelled 1992 legislative elections to thwart a victory by an Islamic fundamentalist party.

At least 60,000 people have been killed in the conflict. President Liamine Zeroual has scheduled the first legislative vote since then for 5 June.

The government statement, describing the massacre as "horrible," said a gang of criminals stormed Haouch Boukhelef-Khemisti farming community in Bougara district. "They (the victims) were savagely assassinated by knives by a gang of terrorists," said the statement, carried by state media. "The attack showed a savagery without any precedent," the government said, urging people to be vigilant and no their guard. Officials use the term "terrorists" or "criminal" to describe fundamentalists who have been fighting to topple the government for five years.

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# Yeltsin courts new friend in the East

Helen Wonnack  
Moscow

The Chinese leader, Jiang Zemin, arrived in Moscow yesterday for a visit which is intended not only to improve relations between Moscow and Peking but also to show the West that Russia, unable to stop Nato expansion, is capable of finding friends elsewhere.

China, which used to compete with the Soviet Union for domination of the Communist world, is happy to play the game with the new Russia for economic reasons and because it dislikes Western criticism of its human rights record. The red carpet was rolled out yesterday when President Jiang, accompanied by his wife and by senior Chinese officials, arrived at Vnukovo-2, the airport for VIPs on the edge of Moscow. Mr Jiang will hold meetings with President Boris Yeltsin today.

He was met by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, just back from Prague where he heard the Czechs, former subjects of the Warsaw Pact, saying politely but firmly that they

regarded Nato membership as vital to their national security.

Even after last month's Helsinki summit, when President Bill Clinton sought to reassure Russia that the West was not trying to isolate it, the Kremlin has continued to object to the eastward expansion of Nato and pointedly develop other relationships. First Mr Yeltsin, to the alarm of his liberal advisers, moved closer to a union with politically repressive and economically backward Belarus. Now he is turning his attention to China.

Long before Nato announced plans to expand, the then Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev healed the rift between the two giants of the east by visiting Peking shortly before the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. Mr Yeltsin also travelled there last year, advised by his Foreign Minister, Yevgeny Primakov, that Russia should not concentrate on ties with the West to the exclusion of other friendships.

The Russians and the Chinese have many areas of mutual interest. This week, Mr Yeltsin and Mr Jiang will sign

a treaty, together with the leaders of three former Soviet republics - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan - on the reduction of armed forces along the former Soviet-Chinese border. In trade talks, Russia will try to sell more arms to China and persuade the Chinese to raise the quality of the consumer goods they sell on the Russian market.

But a political declaration which Mr Yeltsin and Mr Jiang plan to sign is clearly intended to challenge America's dominant role in the world since the collapse of Soviet Communism and the end of the Cold War.

"Russia and China will express their vision of how to form the new international order in the 21st century and will speak out against claims by any country to the role of absolute leader," Mr Yeltsin's spokesman, Sergei Yastrzhembsky, said.

The Chinese ambassador to Moscow, Li Fenglin, added: "This new type of relationship includes a refusal to take part in military blocs, ruling out confrontation and any menace to third parties."



Red letter day: An elderly Russian outside Lenin's mausoleum in Red Square yesterday with a portrait of the Soviet state's founder as communists marked the 127th anniversary of the revolutionary leader's birthday. Photograph: Michael Eustafiev

## Fishing for the answer to Italy's shower curtain mystery

ROME DAYS

You learn the strangest things by moving house. Like the enigma of the non-existent Italian shower curtain. Or the even deeper enigma of the non-existent Italian furniture. Or, most bizarrely, the finer points of fish-gutting in a public fountain. So many piercing insights into utter trivia. And we've only moved a few hundred yards down the street.

Broadly speaking, there are two ways of finding a flat in Rome. The first is called *pot-luck*, and involves turning up upon some kind of chance. It would be so kind as to suit a panoramic attic with extensive roof terraces for a couple of years, all for the price of a couple of cappuccinos a day.

The other, more usual, route involves linking up with a series of *louches* - middlemen with greased-back hair and mobile phones, and looking at a lot of expensive rat holes with no visible signs of running water. "Ah, you wanted windows in

nicely illustrates a broader issue: the lack of a proper consumer culture for household items. There are a few furniture megastores in the suburbs that do endless promotions on local teleshopping channels. But for even a hint of good taste one is obliged to do the rounds of endless small designer shops and artisans' studios.

The process is actually rather pleasant, if time-consuming, involving several visits, oodles of small talk and gallons of coffee.

We had a small room when we discovered that there isn't any on the market except for ferociously expensive stuff dating back to the 16th century, and most of that is probably fake. For reasons too difficult connected to the Romans' historic inability to produce anything of value except by nabbing it from elsewhere, all the furniture on offer comes from France, or Denmark, or eastern Europe - scooping up bargains in Romania is particularly trendy among antiquarians at the moment.

As luck would have it, we were moving from one street full of furniture makers to another full of antique dealers, so we didn't have to look very far. Two years of idle chitchat in the street paid off handsomely as we acquired not only a beautiful handmade bookcase at a knock-down price, but also three trout and a magnificent pike straight out of Lake Bracciano, all courtesy of our fishing-crazy furniture maker friend Franco.

And here came the greatest challenge to our street cred in the neighbourhood. I didn't fancy spilling pike guts all over our brand-new kitchen, so I had to clean out the messiest in the neighbourhood and try to look as though I had been gutting fish all my life.

What I do know is that living in a tight-knit urban community is an art that requires constant refining. Assiduous readers of this column might remember how I got around the tortuous rules for heavy rubbish removal last time we moved by bribing two delivery men to take away our empty boxes. This time around, I went one better. I made friends with the head of the local garbage office and got him to clear away our boxes for nothing more than a cup of coffee and a shot of grappa at the nearest bar. I would have offered him a slice of freshly gutted pike, but strangely he wasn't interested.

Andrew Gumbel

## Buying furniture involves oodles of small talk and gallons of coffee

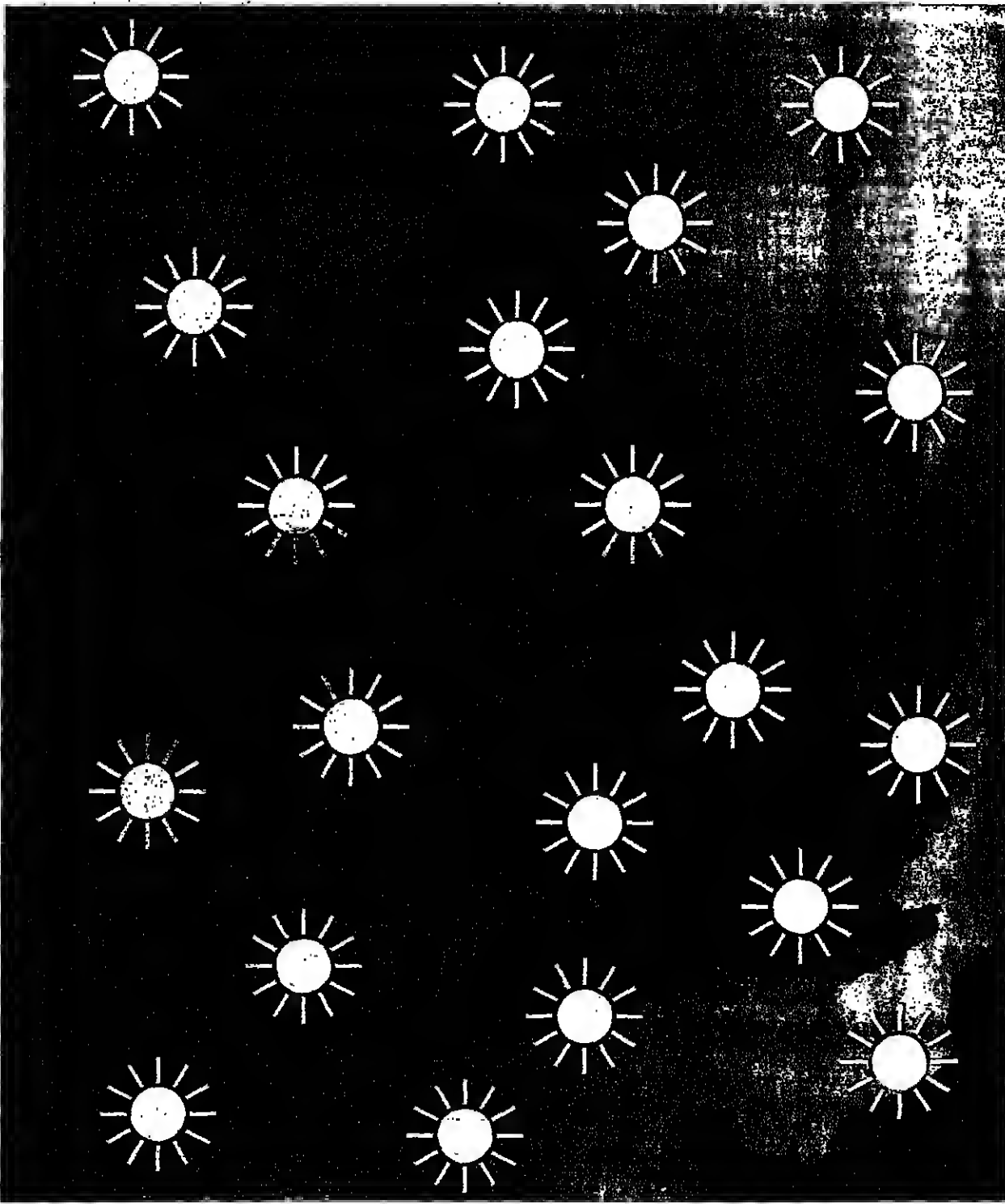
your flat," exclaimed one particularly unsavoury character. "Well of course some people are a bit fussy, aren't they?"

The more places we looked at the more peculiarities we noticed about Roman households. Like their addiction to two or even three bathrooms, even if this means the kitchen is scarcely big enough to strain a pot of pasta, and the living room is pushed halfway into the passage. Why? I'm all in favour of cleanliness, but I really don't see why two people living together can't share their washing facilities.

We never did get a convincing answer to that one. But we did find out why there isn't a single shower curtain to be found. Apparently there's no such thing as a ready-made shower curtain, so the only way to have one is to buy the material, cut it to size, make the loops and stick the whole thing on a specially cut metal bar. Since nobody can be bothered with all that hassle, Rome ends up with a lot of wet bathroom floors.

The shower curtain problem

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# Clinton flies in with promises of help for devastated Grand Forks

Mary Dejevsky  
Washington

President Bill Clinton went to the flood- and fire-ravaged city of Grand Forks in North Dakota yesterday, with promises of a Marshall-plan style rebuilding programme and a sympathetic ear for residents who may never return to their homes. He was greeted by a local newspaper headline, saying: "Welcome to Grand Forks, Mr President. Welcome to our nightmare".

That Mr Clinton - who has tended to delegate natural disaster visits to Vice-President (and future presidential candidate?) Al Gore during his second term and who is still on crutches following his knee injury - made the trip himself is a measure of the magnitude of the devastation, even in a country of real-life disaster spectaculars, and the way it has gripped the American public.

For several days now, the scenes from Grand Forks, where the Red River is running almost 30ft above flood level, have been apocalyptic. Main streets resemble broad rivers, office blocks are several storeys deep in water, suburbs show only red and grey roofs. Older houses are described as looking like tiny medieval castles with moats around them: the whole city as a "ghost town sitting inside a vast chocolate swamp".

Over the weekend, television news showed improbable sequences of city streets submerged under water, while flames spewed from solid brick buildings. First the flood, then the fire, then the plague? was the emotive burden of accompanying commentary.

What caused the fires is not known, but what prevented their dousing was floodwater prevented fire engines reaching the city centre, obscured the fire hydrants and reduced the water pressure, rendering hoses useless.



Black outlook: Howard Hoff, wading through the streets, has refused to leave his Grand Forks home in the evacuation

Photograph: AFP

The floods also breached the city's sewers, making evacuation a priority. By Monday, most of the 50,000 population who remained were subject to "mandatory evacuation". People who had stood on rooftops to catch sight of helicopters trying to douse flames the previous evening were roundly scolded on local radio for their irre-

sponsibility. Only 10 per cent of the city is unaffected.

With the sewerage and other services out of action, there are predictions that much of the city will have to be rebuilt and that it will be months before people will be allowed to return. Estimates of the cost vary from a conservative \$400m to more than \$1bn (£250m-

\$625m). The pessimistic ask whether the city will ever be habitable again.

As with other recent United States floods, the region of Grand Forks is no innocent in matters of flood prevention and planning. It is a threat people live with. Even this year, with a combination of late and very heavy snow followed by a rapid thaw, it was

hoped that a massive volunteer effort to reinforce dikes and build banks of sandbags might save the city. At the end of last week, however, Grand Forks had to concede defeat to the Red River. This was not just another flood, people said, as they abandoned their homes, but the sort of disaster that happens only once in 500 years.

## significant shorts

### Whitewater prosecutors seek to extend inquiry

Whitewater prosecutors said they had gathered "extensive evidence" of possible obstruction of justice and asked a judge to extend the investigating grand jury's term by six months. The office of counsel Kenneth Starr cited the obstruction inquiry and new information from James McDougal, the Clintons' former business partner, in requesting that the jury's term be extended to 7 November; it is set to expire on 7 May. McDougal and his ex-wife Susan were convicted of fraud last year in \$3m in loans from federally backed lenders for Whitewater, a real-estate development. The Clintons have not been charged but are under investigation in Congress.

AP - Little Rock

### Argentina angers Falklanders

The Argentine Foreign Minister, Guido Di Tella, angered Falkland Islanders by promoting his political "charm offensive" on the birthday of the Queen. A letter said: "I would like to repeat my sincere belief that we are getting closer to the point where differences ought to be addressed. I am sure that if we do that, we will find a mutually acceptable solution. I think we all now understand better our respective positions, limitations and possibilities."

Reuters - Port Stanley

### Japan row over mad-cow alert

Dozens of Japanese brain-surgery patients died from a rare contagion linked to "mad-cow" disease after the Health and Welfare Ministry failed to act on a US warning, news reports said. In 1987 ministry officials knew of a warning that Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease could be contracted from transplants of the membrane that covers the brain and upper spinal column, but said the ministry failed to take timely safety measures, which its own research now indicates as the most likely cause of 43 cases of the disease since 1985.

AP - Tokyo

### Saddam son's recovery hopes

Uday, eldest son of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq, said he expected fully to recover from injuries sustained in a December assassination attempt and hoped to be walking within days following surgery on Sunday. Uday said doctors operated on his left leg, while officials had said German and Iraqi doctors were removing a bullet lodged near his spine. There was no explanation for the discrepancy.

AP - Baghdad

### Bahraini children arrested

The Bahrain Islamic Freedom Movement, an opposition group, said 20 Shia Muslims, mostly children, had been arrested in the Gulf state this month in connection with anti-government protests.

Reuters - London

### Ice-hockey chief shot dead

Valentin Sych, head of the Russian Ice Hockey Federation, was shot dead in an apparent contract killing near his villa outside Moscow, police said. His wife was wounded in the attack but managed to summon help by mobile phone.

Reuters - Moscow

## Teenagers lure pizza deliverymen to their deaths

David Wilkinson  
Associated Press

Franklin, New Jersey — Two teenagers "looking for a victim" lured two pizza deliverymen to an abandoned house and killed them in a random spray of bullets, blood and pizza.

The 17- and 18-year-olds are accused of phoning four pizza parlours before they found one that would deliver to the remote, rural house.

livery men drove up and lowered the car window to hand out the pizza, the boys ambushed them, police said.

"I don't know what they had on their minds," said Police Chief Pete Vahaly, who is more used to responding to domestic violence and shoplifting complaints in this usually quiet north-western New Jersey town of about 5,000 people.

After the men were shot in the back, they were dragged out

placed face down on the ground and shot in the head. The last shots were described as being "like an execution," though police said that both victims were probably already dead.

Georgio Gallara, 24, who owned Tony's Pizza and Pasta in neighbouring Hardyston, and his employee, Jeremy Gior-

dano, 22, were killed. At least eight shots were fired. Police were called to the abandoned house by somebody who saw their car and thought there had been an accident.

The teenagers were arrested early on Monday at their homes after calls to pizza parlours were traced to a phone booth

outside a doughnut shop, where they were spotted by witnesses.

At one of the other pizza shops, manager Tim Kiester said the caller had trouble answering routine questions about his address and phone number. Mr Kiester said he had a "gut feeling" something was wrong and told his employee not to

make the delivery. The 18-year-old, Thomas J Koskovich was charged with two counts of murder and weapons violations. The 17-year-old was held on juvenile charges. Both pleaded not guilty and remained in custody. Sussex County prosecutor Dennis O'Leary said robbery was not a motive.

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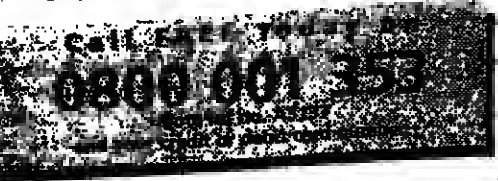
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US



# Mary Thomas

Many singers enjoy rewarding careers in classical music but it is given to few to push forward musical boundaries in the way Mary Thomas did so successfully.

At 10 years old, she was entertaining Swansea audiences by playing the piano, and regular paragraphs in the local press announced yet another exam passed with distinction. Her mother Polly, a stalwart of the chapel choir, encouraged her musical child to sing and dance and take part in all the festivals and cistieddods which South Wales had to offer.

After matriculating, Mary won a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music, through which she began studying. It had still not been decided whether she would become a singer or a pianist. Gradually however the warmth and quality of her voice made a career as a soprano inevitable. The academy awarded her the coveted vocal prize, the first time it had been given to a singer, and, after a singing debut as a student in Mendelssohn's *St Paul*, she was in demand for oratorio before graduation.

At a time when serious young musicians did not, or dared not, cross over the barriers between classical, light music and jazz, Thomas happily disregarded such stuffy boundaries. She enjoyed and actively participated in every kind of music. Her mastery of other crafts was indubitable, so when she chose to tour with Perry Como or Guy Mitchell, or when her distinctive voice was heard in jingles for InterCity rail and fizzy drinks, eyebrows may have been raised but it did no harm to her career.

She had a wicked and somewhat risqué sense of humour and at the backing and jingle sessions was very much one of the lads. Sharing a house with her, I used to wait eagerly for her return to be regaled with the latest jokes doing the rounds. In early days when money was

rather short, we formed a "sisters act" at the piano and appeared in cabaret at Rotary dinners where we slipped in the more suitable of the jokes.

Singing the standard soprano oratorio and lieder repertoire, Thomas quickly became a popular and frequent broadcaster. She sang the annual BBC *Messiah*, appeared in the Proms at the Albert Hall and was booked for the series *Friday Night is Music Night* and *Land of Song*. She often featured as the singer with the Nash Ensemble and the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble but it was when she joined the avant-garde group the Fires of London and became the muse of their conductor Peter Maxwell Davies that musical frontiers were extended.

Maxwell Davies became enchanted by her ability. "Without Mary Thomas," he said, "most of the music I wrote for the Fires just wouldn't have been in existence. She was a wonderful inspiration and I will be forever grateful for her unique lyrical and dramatic qualities which always excited me to create works for her special artistry."

The first of several juicy works he wrote for her was *Miss Donathorne's Maggot* (1974), a solo musical version of the read Australian bride's story. Liked on her wedding day, she lived thereafter in her wedding dress among the disintegrating remains of the wedding feast. The critics of the London broadcasts were unanimous in their praise. "A devastating singer and actress," "a superb soprano who is as good as an actress," "an extraordinary vocal, musical and histrionic performance".

The most demanding piece Maxwell Davies conceived for Thomas was *The Medium* (1981), a 45-minute unaccompanied musical theatre drama during which the audience is left to decide whether the medium is hearing voices or whether



Descending: Thomas in Peter Maxwell Davies's *The Medium*, 1981.

Photograph: Gennie Morgan

she is the mistress who murdered her child. "Mary Thomas raved, pleaded, imagined, chanted, shouted, crawled and sang with incredible concentration and conviction... unquestionably one of the great vocal virtuosi of the day," wrote *Time Out*.

On one occasion, after bringing the house down with a performance of *The Medium* in New York, Thomas went on to a party with Leonard Bernstein who had been in the audience and he and "La Thomas", as he called her,

played jazz duets at the piano until the small hours.

Mary Thomas shared her ability and knowledge. Her warmth and friendliness made her a popular teacher. She was a professor at the Royal Academy of Music but had also for many years taught actors and actresses how to put across a number. She coached many stars including Twiggy for *The Boy Friend* (1971), Elizabeth Seal for *The Pajama Game*, and, more recently, Honor Blackman.

The cellist Edward Holmes,

also from Swansea, was Thomas's lifelong partner and they had a house in Swansea's well as London. If one thing apart from her talent marked Mary Thomas out, it was that success changed her not a jot. She continued to play the organ in church every Sunday and kept her strong Welsh accent and sense of fun to the end.

Lynne Sea Kay

Averil Mary Thomas, singer, born Swansea 2 August 1932; married Edward Holmes; died London 17 April 1997.

# Henry Lang

When Henry Lang was appointed Secretary to the New Zealand Treasury in 1966 he became the youngest ever head of its civil service. He was part of that remarkable 'Vietnam' diaspora that was to contribute so much to the country in which they settled.

Lang was born in Vienna in 1919, just five months after the end of the First World War. Life was comfortable as his father Robert was a prosperous manufacturer living in the affluent, wine-growing suburb of Grinzing. The marriage later broke up and his mother married the architect Ernst Pischke.

Lang was educated at a Real Gymnasium which emphasised studies in the humanities and engineering. By the end of the 1930s, he had mastered and had served a year in the army when Hitler invaded Austria. He was difficult after the Anschluss but Pischke had personal influence in Berlin to get the family out in 1938. Lang, his mother Anna and his stepfather escaped to New Zealand, arriving in 1939. Pischke also ensured that Lang's father was able to leave.

The New Zealand way of life must have seemed strange after the formality of Vienna. Lang told the New Zealand author Ann Beeghly, in her fascinating study of refugees *A Small Price to Pay* (1988), that he was accustomed to a degree of formality and rigid class distinctions. He was surprised by guests who called in wearing their 'garden' clothes. "In Europe one had to be a gardener to do the gardening and one didn't go visiting without a tie."

Despite not speaking much English, he quickly adjusted to the country and worked to pay for his university studies. Within three years of arriving he married Octavia Turkun and two years later, in 1944, he graduated from Victoria University, Wellington with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Commerce degrees. He planned various enterprises including a sawmill business which ended up with the barrel, the *Shuerkraut* was soaked in rotting in the shed.

Lang continued military service and served two years in the Royal New Zealand Air Force. Demobilised in 1946, he joined

the New Zealand government and held various economic appointments before going to the Treasury in 1952. His rise there was rapid and three years later he was appointed Economic Adviser to the New Zealand High Commissioner in London.

It was then the key diplomatic post as the majority of New Zealand's trade was still with Britain. Now with a young family, he enjoyed life for three years in Dahlgren, south London. In 1968 he became Secretary to the Treasury and head of the New Zealand civil service. It was a job he held both as Permanent and Cabinet Secretary.

Lang presided over economic matters at a turbulent time for New Zealand. The economy suffered two severe blows. Britain joined the EEC and New Zealand had to search out new markets for its dairy products and meat. Secondly, the oil crisis hit a country with, at that time, no indigenous gas or oil production.

The Labour Finance Minister and then Prime Minister Bill Rowling and Lang worked well together and they became life-long friends. But then Robert Muldoon swept back to power in 1975. The relationship between Muldoon and Lang was stormy, and Lang stunned the country by taking early retirement in 1977. Always the loyal civil servant, he had retired, Muldoon paid him generous tribute stating that he was the best Secretary to the Treasury he had ever known.

Lang started a new career with relish. He spent five years as Visiting Professor of Economics at Victoria University. He enjoyed teaching students because he genuinely liked young people and related to them in a quite remarkable way. He took up directorships including two of the country's largest companies, New Zealand Forest Products and Challenge Corporation.

Lang saw the futility of the protectionist policies pursued by the Muldoon government of 1975-84. He acted as an adviser to the Labour government, under David Lange, which threw open the New Zealand economy. However, he did not like "Rogernomics" - the coun-

try's extreme monetarism - because it lacked humanity.

He played an active part in the development of the arts in New Zealand. This was crowned by joining the board, chaired by Bill Rowling, of the ambitious, new national museum under construction in Wellington.

Lang's stepfather Pischke was a renowned architect, influenced by the Bauhaus style. He was the potter Lucie Rie's mentor, had designed her Viennese home and the Lang family were her close friends. Henry Lang always visited her on his frequent trips to London.

He was last in London in September for the wedding of his photographer daughter Frances, a contributor to the *Independent on Sunday*. Frances married Mark Brand in Westminster.



Lang: immigrant spirit

Abbey only to perish in the Peru air crash on their honeymoon.

Henry Lang epitomised the spirit of a country built by immigration. He went from refugee to head of the civil service and contributed to the country's development not only in economics but also in nurturing the arts.

Lindsay Offer

Henry George Lang, economist, civil servant and businessman; born Vienna 3 March 1919; Economic Adviser to New Zealand High Commissioner; London 1955-58; Secretary of Treasury and Head of NZ Civil Service 1968-77; CB 1977; Visiting Professor of Economics, Victoria University of Wellington 1977-82; ONZ 1989; married 1942 Olivia Turkun (one son, three daughters, and one daughter deceased); died Wellington, New Zealand 16 April 1997.

# Eddie Quigley

He never cut the most athletic of figures on the football field, but that didn't stop Eddie Quigley becoming, for a time, the most expensive player in the history of the British game.

In fact, the burly Lancastrian belied his ponderous appearance and misleadingly languid air to become one of the most proficient and sought-after goalkeepers of the post-war era, arguably describing more international recognition than the two England "B" caps which went his way. In some ways Quigley was ahead of his time, a deceptively deep-thinking marksman blessed with subtle passing skills, the type of operator destined to become fashionable in the mid-1950s, when his playing days were drawing to a close.

He began his career in 1941 with his home-town club, Bury, as a full-back but his destiny became clear one day at Millwall when, switched to centre-forward, he scored five goals. Thereafter Quigley remained in the front line - either as spearhead or, more often, as an inside-forward - and soon caught the eye of more fashionable clubs.

In October 1947 he joined Sheffield Wednesday for £12,000, going on to score freely for two years, but it was his next move which catapulted Quigley into the headlines. When he switched



Quigley: ahead of his time

Photograph: Hulton Getty

to Preston North End in December 1949, the fee was £26,500, a British transfer record.

The idea was that he would forge a stylish partnership with the marvellous Tom Finney but, in a booting session, the two never gelled. Thus, after helping Preston to lift the Second Division title in 1951, he moved on again, this time to Blackburn Rovers - his fourth Division Two club - for £20,000.

At Ewood Park, Quigley hit prime form, flourishing especially under the attacking regime of the manager Johnny Carey, and netting 95 times in 166 senior outings before returning to Bury for his last campaign, as a 35-year-old in 1956.

Always a serious student of the game, Quigley appeared ideal management material and he spent six years learning his trade with non-League Mossley. Then, in 1962, he returned to Football League ranks as Bury's youth coach and chief scout, uncaring such talents as Colin Bell and Alec Lindsay, both of whom would go on to play for England.

Quigley's first berth as a boss was at Stockport, where he moved in April 1966, remaining at Edgeley Park for just six months during which he did much of the spadework towards County's Fourth Division title triumph of 1966/67. However, by the time the trophy was presented, he had departed to Blackburn, where he became chief coach and assistant manager to Jack Mansell, who was soon to resign.

After a brief spell as caretaker, during which Rovers narrowly missed promotion to the First Division, Quigley was confirmed as fully fledged boss in April 1967. He had earned a reputation as a shrewd tactician and much was expected of him, but the next two terms proved frustrating, with promising starts followed by springtime fade-outs.

Come 1970, with the team struggling, Quigley swapped jobs with the general manager

Carey. True, he had responsibility for scouting and the youth system but he was never happy in a mainly administrative role, preferring the day-to-day involvement with the senior side. At the end of 1970/71, against a background of severe financial constraint, Blackburn were relegated to the Third Division for the first time in their history and both Carey and Quigley were sacked.

The latter, who had been criticised for being over-reliant on blackboard theory, returned to the fray as manager of Stockport in 1976 and derived enormous satisfaction when his comparatively humble charges knocked Blackburn out of the League Cup at Ewood Park. Sadly, a slump followed and he was sacked in 1977. Quigley went on to scout for Blackburn, under Howard Kendall, and Blackpool before retiring in the early 1980s.

Ivan Pounting

Edward Quigley, footballer and manager; born Bury, Lancashire 13 July 1921; played for Bury 1941-47, Sheffield Wednesday 1947-49, Preston North End 1949-51, Blackburn Rovers 1951-56, Bury 1956, managed Stockport County 1966 and 1976-77, Blackburn Rovers 1967-70; married (one son, one daughter); died Blackpool 18 April 1997.

Fabian Dobles was one of Costa Rica's leading writers - the most prolific and the most celebrated.

His works include short stories, novels, plays, poetry, essays and articles. It is in his stories and novels that he made his major contribution, focusing on social and political problems, observing the changes from traditional values to modern thinking, and expressing an intimate knowledge and love of Costa Rica, its people and language.

Most people in England know little about Costa Rica. It rarely hits the 'international' headlines. Dobles regarded himself as "a big fish in a small pond", but did see some of his stories published in anthologies abroad alongside those of other Latin American writers such as Marquez, Borges, Faulkner, Quirga and Asturias. However, his novels were not published in translation until his last, *Years like Brief Days*, was published in English in 1986.

Fabian was born in 1918 in the small country town of San Antonio de Belen, the seventh child of the local doctor. Some of the details of his childhood and youth are related in his final novel, a pseudo-autobiography, telling how he was forced to become a seismologist by his father as a thank-

offering for the family's immunity from typhoid.

This experience gave him an early realisation that his father's traditional values were not his - a theme he was later to elaborate in other works. He left the Church and went to university in San Jose to study Law, where he made a name for himself as a poet and storyteller. In 1943 his first novel, *Aguas Terribles* ("Frenzied Waters"), written in the vernacular, represented Costa Rica in the Latin American competition for Novelists. This and other early works established him as an accomplished writer dealing with matters of social significance in a local setting. In 1950 came his best-known novel to date, *El*



Dobles: rich night colour

*Shio de las Abras* ("The Siege of the Cleared Land"), which has so far been through 10 editions. It tackles the problem of change in country areas caused by deforestation and exploitation of the land and the campesinos by ruthless land-owners.

A left-wing intellectual, Dobles had to struggle to survive as a writer during a period of considerable social and political change. He fell foul of the authorities through his social realism and political alignment. (His dramatic 1967 novel *En el San Juan River are Sharks*, for example, depicts the bravery of Costa Rican guerrilla fighters who joined forces with Nicaraguan rebels against the Sandinista regime.) So he was obliged to support his growing family by doing a variety of other jobs including work in industry, commerce and agriculture.

This wide experience deepened his understanding and appreciation of popular traditions and language, and led in 1956 to *Historias de Tasa Mundo* ("The Stories of Tasa Mundo"), for which he is most celebrated nationally. The richness of local colour, lively dialogue and perceptive portrayal of character bear witness to his sense of humour, love of lan-

guage and above all, love of his country and people.

He was to receive many prestigious awards during his life, both national and international, but confessed that what he prized most of all was the affection and respect of his fellow countrymen who saw in his work a national pride together with a faithful account of their way of life, their language and their aspirations. But although his work is centred on Costa Rica it is universal in its sentiments.

His *Obras Completas* in five volumes were published in 1993 by the University of Costa Rica and the National University Press jointly, and are now in their second edition. A few months before his death, which was hastened by a struggle against emphysema, he was honoured publicly by what turned out to be a final official tribute by the State following the publication in English of his last novel - *Los Años Pequeños* (1989) under the title *Years like Brief Days* - by Peter Owen in association with Unesco. His surprise and joy were unbounded.

Joan Henry

Fabian Dobles, writer; born San Antonio de Belen, Costa Rica 17 January 1918; married Cecilia Trejos (five daughters); died 22 March 1997.

# Births, Marriages & Deaths

## DEATHS

HARRISON, WLS. (Leslie), on 19 April, of Heston, Middlesex, 96. Widow of Gwen (née Francis), father of Ruth and Hilary. Funeral private.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, In Memoriam) should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 3DL, telephoned to 0171-233 3912 or faxed to 0171-233 3910, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHER Gazette announcements must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be received by a day-time telephone number.

## ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen took the pre-nuptial photograph of Prince Charles and Princess Diana on 28 July 1981. The Queen Mother attended a reception given by the British Overseas Airways Corporation at Heathrow Airport, London, on 28 July 1981. The Queen and Prince Charles attended a reception of the Commonwealth Heads of State Conference in London, on 28 July 1981. The Queen and Prince Charles attended a reception of the Commonwealth Heads of State Conference in London, on 28 July 1981.

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment performed the Changing of the Guard at Whitehall, London, on 28 July 1981. The Queen and Prince Charles attended a reception of the Commonwealth Heads of State Conference in London, on 28 July 1981.

## Birthdays

Mrs Shirley Temple Black, former child actress and US ambassador, 69; The Most Rev Michael Bowen, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Southwark, 67; Mr Bill Cotton, chairman, Noel Gay Television, 69; Mr Antony Craxton, television producer, 79; Mr J.P. Donaghy, author, 71; Mr Barry Douglas, concert pianist, 37; Mr Desmond Downes, automotive engineer, 75; Mr Harold French, actor, theatre and film director, 100; Mr Leslie French, actor, singer and director, 93; Air Marshal Sir Timothy Garden, Director, Royal Institute of International Affairs, 53; The Hon Victoria Gledhill, author, 60; Mr William Hagerty, former Editor, the People, 58; Sir Arnold Hall, former chairman, Hawker Siddeley Group, 82; Sir Russell Hillhouse, Permanent Under-Secretary, Scottish Office, 59; Mr Kevin Jarvis, cricketer, 44; Mr James Kirkup, author and playwright, 74; Dr Richard Laws, former Master, St Edmund's College, Cambridge, 71; Mr Tony Mills, chess player, 42; Mr Ronald Neame, film producer and director, 86; Mr Mike Smith, disc jockey, 42; Professor George Steiner, Extraordinary Fellow, Churchill College, Cambridge, 68; Mr Ed Stewart, former disc jockey, 56; Sir Herbert Taylor, actor, 89; Miss Tessa Wyatt, actress, 49; Sir Eric Yarrow, former chairman, Clydesdale Bank, 77.

## Anniversaries

Births: William Shakespeare, playwright and poet, 1564; Maarten Harpertzoon Tromp, naval commander, 1598; George, Baron Anson, admiral and explorer, 1697; Samuel

Wells, navigator and discoverer of Wallis Island, 1728; Joseph Mallord William Turner, painter, 1775; James Buchanan, 15th US president, 1791; Maria Tagliioni, ballerina, 1804; Thomas Weigh, historian and antiquary, 1810; Louis-Antoine Julien (Julien), conductor, 1812; James Anthony Froude, historian, 1818; Pierre Dupont, songwriter, 1821; Max Ludwig Planck, physicist, 1858; Dame Ethel Mary Smyth, composer, 1858; Frank Bourage, film director, 1893; Margaret Kennedy, novelist, 1896; Lester Bowles Pearson, statesman, 1897; Dame Edith Ngila Marsh, novelist, 1899; Vladimir Vladimirovich Nabokov, author and lepidopterist, 1899; Deaths: William Shakespeare, playwright and poet, 1616; Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, author, 1616; Maurice of Nassau, Prince of Orange, 1625; Henry Vaughan ("The Sûr"), poet, 1695; Thomas Tickle, poet, 1740; Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich, painter, 1774; Joseph Nollekens, sculptor, 1823; Erik Gustaf Geijer, poet and historian, 1847; William Wordsworth, poet, 1850; Auguste Laurent, chemist, 1853; Friedrich Preller, landscape painter, 1878; Maria Tagliioni, ballerina, 1884; Karl Friedrich Wilhelm Ludwig, physiologist, 1895; Rupert Chawner Brooke, poet, 1913; Joseph Pennell, artist and author, 1926; Li-Car Percy Thomson Dean VC, killed at Zeebrugge 1918; Elisabeth Schumann, singer, 1926; Larry "Buster" Crabbe (Clarence Linden Crabbe), swimmer and actor, 1931; Kent Smith, actor, 1985; Harold Arlen (Hyman Arluck), composer, 1986; Otto Preminger, film director, 1986; Arthur Michael, Lord Ramsey, for-

mer Archbishop of Canterbury, 1988. On this day King Brian Boru of Ireland beat back the Danes at the Battle of Clontarf, 1014; the Order of the Garter was founded by King Edward III, 1349; Connecticut was declared as an English colony, 1666; Warren Hastings was acquitted of high treason, 1795; Missolonghi was captured by the Turks, 1826; plans for a Channel Tunnel were turned down by Queen Victoria and Emperor Napoleon III of France, 1867; Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *Pirates* was first produced, London 1881; the Battle of Zeebrugge ended, 1918; the British Empire Exhibition was opened at Wembley, 1924; the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre was opened at Stratford-on-Avon, 1932; Allied forces in Italy reached the river Po, 1945; the oil pipeline from Kirkuk to Basra was completed, 1952; the first helicopter in Britain was opened in London on Thames-side, 1959; the first decimal coins were issued in Britain (5p and 10p), but were used as one-shilling and two-shilling pieces until decimalisation, 1968; the republics of the Soviet Union were granted the right to secede under certain conditions, 1991. Today is St George's Day and the Feast Day of St Adalbert (Vohles) of Prague. Saints Felix, Fortunatus and Achilleus, St Gerard of Toul and St Iker.

## Lectures

Date Gallery: Kurt Paozer Lecture, Sam Sides, "Turner's Narratives: tales of mystery and imagination", 6.30pm. British Museum Dominic Montserrat, "Mummy Portraits: their uses and subsequent value", 6.30pm.

# Genuine British passport proves citizenship

Region v Secretary of State for the Home Department, ex parte Oki; Quigley Bench Division Crown Office List (Mr Justice Sedley) 18 April 1997

A person seeking to enter the United Kingdom discharged the burden of proving British citizenship, established by section 3(8) of the Immigration Act 1971, by producing a genuine passport describing him as a British citizen. There was no further burden upon the entrant to prove his identity.

The Queen's Bench Division quashed the determination of the Home Secretary that the applicant was an illegal entrant. The applicant had entered the United Kingdom on 13 July 1995, using a British passport issued to him on 19 May 1995 for a six-month period in the name of Chukwudi Oki. On 17 October 1995, when he applied for renewal of the passport, he was arrested and served with a notice directed to him as an illegal entrant.

Seferian Harrison (Edwards) v. Harrison, Liverpool for the applicant; Steven Kovats (Treasury Solicitor) for the Home Secretary.

Mr Justice Sedley said that the

## LAW REPORT

23 April 1997

principal question to be decided was one of pure law: was it for the Home Secretary to satisfy the court that the applicant was an illegal entrant or for the applicant to satisfy the court that he was not?

While it had rightly been conceded that on the evidence, any one who might rest on the Home Secretary could not be discharged, it was true of the applicant if in law the onus was on him. He had produced to the Passport Agency material sufficient to secure the lawful issue of him of a full British passport in the name of Chukwudi Oki, but there was some doubt that he was in fact Chukwudi Oki. He was on him to prove his identity in order to prove that he was not an illegal entrant. He had not discharged that burden on the balance of probability.

Everything turned, therefore, on where the burden of proof lay, but within that question was another: proof of what? The ultimate question was whether the applicant was or was not an illegal entrant.

Section 33(1) of the Immigration Act 1971 provided that an illegal entrant was a person who unlawfully entered, sought to enter or had entered the United Kingdom in breach of immigration laws. A person with the right of abode in the United Kingdom was not an illegal entrant. Section 3(8) of the 1971 Act provided that it was for a person asserting that he was a British citizen to prove that he was, and by section 3(9) a person claiming to have the right of abode should prove it by means of... (a) a United Kingdom passport describing him as a British citizen...

The applicant contended that he had satisfied both subsections (8) and (9). The Home Secretary accepted that the passport he had produced described Mr Oki as a British citizen, but contended that until the applicant had proved that he was Mr Oki, the passport did not come within subsection (9). He submitted that, once identity had been queried, it was up to the entrant to prove the further fact that he was

the Mr Oki described by the passport as a British citizen.

In the factual situation described, his Lordship had reached the conclusion that no such further burden rested upon an entrant. He remained open to all the sanctions of the law if it could be proved that he had secured the passport by fraud. Until that point was reached, however, the production of a genuine passport which described as a British citizen a person who was undoubtedly the person seeking to enter, discharged the burden of proof of British citizenship established by section 3(8).

Although the authorities cited to the court contained relevant pointers, the real answer to the question posed was in a straightforward reading and application of section 3(9) in its legal and historical context. Any other approach reduced the section to a shadow of Parliament's evident intention and placed the executive in almost unchallengeable command of a liberty which, section 3(8) apart, was in our law one of the individual's most prized protections.

Kate O'Hanlon, Barrister

150 من الأصل



# French voters have Britain in their hands

Jacques Chirac is taking a great risk. By ordering the premature dissolution of the National Assembly, the French president is putting his authority on the line, along with the fate of the centre-right majority. He puts Europe at risk, too. Or rather, he may be jeopardising the "project" of monetary union and deeper institutional integration within the European Union. For during the election campaign, short as it is, a Gallic brand of Euro-scepticism (not to be confused with the offshore species) may seize its hour.

"Europe is peace," M Chirac said in his television address to the French people on Monday. But what if significant numbers of electors prefer war – war on the unemployment they may (wrongly) blame on preparation for the single currency, war on the cuts in social spending they (half-correctly) blame on the euro, war on the fishermen and beef-farmers of Britain and the freedom of trade which has allowed their produce into France? On present arithmetic the Gaullist-liberal majority in the assembly will lose seats but retain power. But what if – this is not a contradictory proposition – the elections result in an assembly in which European naysayers have the edge (for example if the National Front makes big gains or the Gaullists in the RPR stiffen their stance)?

In such circumstances, French participation in the Amsterdam intergovernmental conference in June becomes

problematic... a lamed president and an uncertain prime minister would be unlikely to offer strong leadership. In turn, German attitudes would be affected, for the French would surely be pressing to soften the Maastricht criteria and politicise the conduct of the European bank. And so on.

This then is an election to watch. Without France – meaning the assent of French people in the main – there can be no monetary union. Without France – meaning a French government confirmed in power – institutional reform within the European Union cannot happen. Thus on France and French electors depends the very opportunity for a British prime minister to display the macho attitudes espoused so ostentatiously in recent days by Messrs Major and Blair.

The constitutional power under which President Chirac has acted saw service in 1968 when Charles de Gaulle faced a crisis of state. M Chirac's position is hardly comparable. The Gaullist-liberal coalition has a handsome majority of seats which did not have to be vacated till next year – allowing more than enough time to enact the savings needed if France is to meet the Maastricht criteria. Dissolution now, as the socialist leader Lionel Jospin observed, looks suspiciously like a request for a blank cheque, not just to make spending cuts but to accept the euro on more or less Germany's terms. To that extent,

this will be a European election, a chance for the French people to revisit the territory they voted on in that close referendum in 1992.

Of course there are other factors in play, among them the corruption charges pending against a number of the President's henchmen (and in the case of the mayor of Paris, Jean Thibault, their wives too). For many Frenchmen and women, Europe may bulk considerably less large than their resentment at unemployment or immigration. There is in France (as in Germany) a note of that fatalism about the European "project" – Jacques Santer,

president of the European Commission, was using the language of historical inevitability again the other day – which grates so on British ears. Yet it seems unlikely that Europe will not feature in this French election. A key figure is M Jospin. He resolutely opposes further "austerity" for the sake of meeting the Maastricht criteria. If he makes Europe the issue this contest can only be viewed – here in the United Kingdom – as most welcome.

Here is an opportunity to test the water, to consult, to seek to bring the costs and opportunities of closer union home to people. Europe cannot be

built by policy élites: that surely was the lesson of the Maastricht referendums five years ago. M Santer recognised the fact in his controversial speech, though he offered few thoughts on the remedy. M Jospin has spoken about offering a referendum – another means of securing the people's assent (or their rejection) of momentous actions taken by governments in their name.

Another reason for attending these elections closely is to learn something about the ideology of British Euro-scepticism. In France, M Jospin wants to make an issue of the Juppé government's economic liberalism by identifying the enemy of France as that "capitalisme dur" which the Anglo-Saxons have clasped to their bosoms and which he does not want to see built into the European Union. Thus his demand for an "economic government" to parallel the European Central Bank. M Jospin is being pushed to take an even tougher line on the euro by the Communists. But, inevitably, the anti-Brussels banner will be waved most energetically by Jean-Marie Le Pen, whose latest *bon mot* is that the Holocaust was an "historical detail".

Across the Continent, intelligent Euro-scepticism is starting to be heard from the left-of-centre, for example in Germany from Gerhard Schröder, the prime minister of Lower Saxony. As a result, hard-nationalist Europhobia, a territory inhabited here by certain

Tory MPs and their one-time paymaster Sir James Goldsmith, is in France and Germany the prerogative of the far right.

The French election campaign will begin in earnest next month, leading to a first round of votes on 25 May. By then many British people will be panting: "enough elections!" But the contest is worth following. It is not much exaggeration to say that upon its outcome the fate of the next British government hangs.

## A Union of debatable value

In all universities, student politics is at a low ebb. That is regrettable if it leads on to graduates avoiding engagement with civic life. But it is hard to see modern students regaining their interest in politics by taking part in full-fledged debating with proposers in black tie and all the rest. Debating is an anachronism which hangs on only in such places as the House of Commons and the Oxford and Cambridge Unions. Perhaps, without the latter, the former might be a better place. Given the qualities in office of so many of the politicians these Unions have bequeathed to the nation, it is hard to panic at the news that the Oxford Union is in financial difficulty.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Critical battle for European aerospace

Sir: Michael Harrison's article (18 April) concerning British Aerospace Airbus's repayments of launch aid on the A320 raised the vexed question of subsidy and political support in civil aircraft manufacture and the dispute between the US and EU on this issue.

Europe's response to US dominance in the civil aeronautics field brought forth the Airbus consortium in the late Sixties. The consortium was the beneficiary of state aid, precisely because this was the only way that Europe could hope to compete with the giant American corporations which were the recipients of largesse from the Department of Defense and NASA. US supremacy in civil aeronautics arose because the civil industry was embedded in a massive research and development and manufacturing infrastructure created by Cold War military policy, which placed airpower at the centre of defence strategy.

The successful manufacturers were helped through lean times on the civil side by guaranteed military orders done on a cost-plus basis. At the same time, US provision of global security linked sales of both military and civil aircraft to continued American leadership of organisations such as Nato. After all, who in their right mind would have freely chosen to buy an aircraft such as the Lockheed Starfighter?

Bearing in mind these points we in Europe need to see US claims about the role of the market and free trade in civil aeronautics as a smoke screen. Further, dual-use technologies in aerospace, originally developed on the military side, may have a number of civil applications. For example, where did the Integrated Modular Avionics on the 777 come from?

Europe needs to see aerospace more clearly as a strategic industry with important externalities to be considered in addition to simple models of profitability. Aerospace is a prime medium for systems integration across diverse leading-edge technologies. The industry is also a major source of export earnings for Europe. Aerospace jobs are highly skilled and add enormous value through the production stage.

Finally, aerospace is critical to Europe's security. It should not be assumed that the US will always back up Europe's air force capacity, or that US airpower will always be available when European interests are threatened.

Today in the US the aerospace defence and civil sectors move ever closer together, with benefit to both sides. Airbus's US rival Boeing has an enormous defence portfolio and is at the centre of a strategy to use aerospace high technology as a springboard for a new assertiveness in US trade policy. Europe needs to be aware that while the US talks free trade it is practising mercantilism. Professor PHILIP LAWRENCE, Aerospace Research Group, University of the West of England, Bristol.

Sir: A J Terry seeks an explanation for John Major's free vote mystery (letter, 21 April). Mr Major's impressive election broadcast was quite clear – the vote in Parliament will be on whether or not to endorse the Government's recommendation. Only if the Government backs entering the



euro, and Parliament subsequently supports this, will there then be a referendum.

Under these circumstances it is vital that MPs have a free vote. Otherwise, if both government and opposition support entry, any debate in Parliament will be a nonsense. On an issue so important, MPs must be given the freedom to argue their own case and to represent the views of their constituents – both in Parliament and on the dolesteps during a referendum campaign. Only then will this country get the serious debate it deserves.

During this election campaign we should be encouraging candidates to discuss the single currency openly with constituents; we need to know where our MP stands. It seems that Tony Blair wants only to stifle debate – by pillorying Tory MPs who speak their mind, and by making it clear that Labour MPs will be expected to follow the whip in any Commons vote.

Democracy is best served by a free and open vote, whether in Parliament or in the country. MARCUS YOUNG, Ely, Cambridgeshire

Sir: As a Spaniard living here for many years, I have of course been deeply depressed by the recent sight of super-patriotic bulldogs and German-baiting posters in the election campaign. There is, however, a very different Britain, which for us foreigners is far more important.

I recently went to the Victoria & Albert Museum to see once more what is for me the most beautiful object there – Nino Pisano's *Angel of the Annunciation*. Disappointed that it was badly lit, I went to the front desk, where a

charming lady volunteer encouraged me to fill in a comments form. To my surprise and delight, I received within a week a personal letter back from the curator informing me that changes had been made in the lighting and hoping that they would meet with my approval on my next visit.

I doubt whether any other museum in Europe would have paid any attention to my comments, let alone taken any action. This kind of personal attention is to us in Europe far more important than the jingoistic rhetoric of your politicians. LUIS CANIZARES, London SW3

### Purple and privileged

Sir: Some have suspected it for a long time, New Labour is now to the right of the Tories. Purple, their new colour, is of royalty, privilege, that of the highest in rank, of moneyed cardinals and bishops. We know that New Labour is a "broad church" but surely not in this sense. It may be appropriate, however, for those who send their children to fee-paying schools.

Red on the other hand stands for Old Labour virtues, the colour of magic, magnanimity and fortitude. Still a colour of privilege, adopted by humankind after Henry II declared fox-hunting a royal sport, it is red which is the colour of passion. Women's magazines agree that red is the colour of seduction,

intensity and adoration, the colour to bring about changes.

But purple may have been adopted as a subconscious linking with its classical use as the colour of death. Homer wrote, "purple death fell over him" – certainly Tony Blair's fate if Labour is defeated on 1 May. And in Italy it is still a most unlucky colour, one never worn by surgeons in the operating theatre.

Colour symbolism, particularly change of a colour symbol, is not to be undertaken lightly or by those not well versed in the subject. A piece of advice: forget purple. JOHN HUTCHINGS, Colour and Appearance Consultant, Bedford

Sir: The image of Tony Blair and Chancellor Kohl has an older history than you might think. The 12th-century historian William of Malmesbury records that in 1121 Pope Calixtus II ridiculed the antipope Gregory VIII, whose election had been engineered by the German Emperor Henry V, as "that puppet of the king of Germany".

Tories will be gratified to learn that the English commentator considered the jibe "an exquisite and refined piece of wit". As their fortunes continue to languish, they may also find comfort in the fate of the antipope, who was arrested by the church authorities and forced to end his days in a remote monastery pressed into service as an ecclesiastical high-security prison. ALAN MACCOLL, St Leonards, Fife

### Ignore IRA's bomb warnings

Sir: I would like to support Roy Jenkins' suggestion, which I heard on the television, that it is time we stopped taking responsibility for the outcome of IRA action.

In the last war, when train travel became unreliable, I bought a bicycle to travel the daily seven miles to work between Lee Green and Blackfriars. When notices notified unexploded bombs, we just walked carefully round them and continued on our way. The war certainly would have been lost if we'd waited for them to be cleared away. It is quite ridiculous to allow a few telephone calls to disrupt the whole business of any area.

The Government should first state that the IRA is entirely responsible for any destruction or casualties arising from IRA activities, then give warnings of telephone calls of possible danger and let ordinary citizens get on with whatever business they wish. I'm sure present-day workers have as much determination as their forebears not to be beaten into submission by an enemy. Mrs B M L PERRY, Chesham, Essex

### Byron's 'bulldog'

Sir: Anthony Thornton ("A softie, and no bull: Labour's choice wins a pat", 19 April), refers to Lord Byron's endorsement of the bulldog and quotes the poet's

epitaph to his pet dog Boatswain. Mr Thornton has got the right quote, but the wrong dog. Boatswain was a Newfoundland dog.

My reference book describes this breed as "originally brought from the country of which they bear the name, where their great strength and docility render them extremely useful to the settlers". In contrast, "the Bull-Dog always makes his attack without barking; it is very dangerous in approach him alone, without the greatest precaution".

Who made the right choice, Lord Byron or New Labour? ANTHONY FENLEY, Oxford

### Sainted actors

Sir: If your correspondents (Letters, 19 and 21 April) are going to discuss such important matters as the number of actors who have portrayed Simon Templar, they (or you) should perhaps invest in some basic reference material, such as David Pringle's admirable *Imaginary People*.

This mentions films featuring Louis Hayward, George Sanders, Hugh Sinclair and Jean Marais (in French). There have also been radio dramatisations starring Brian Aherne, Vincent Price and Tim Conway (in the US) and Terence De Marney (in the UK). Add Moore and Ogilvy from the television, and now Val Kilmer on film, and this seems to add up to at least 11; as Pringle does not claim to be completely comprehensive, there may well be more. P J MASTERS, Baldock, Hertfordshire

### Magpies found not guilty

Sir: The British Trust for Ornithology has not failed to address the possible link between the decline of many familiar songbirds and the increase in magpie numbers (Letters, 19 April). Our data, based on the work of tens of thousands of birdwatchers over many years, provide more detailed information than just the gross population trends.

We use our data both to investigate various potential causes of reductions in bird numbers and to focus more detailed studies on the most likely of them. So far, the evidence is that magpies, while they may affect the numbers of some other species on a local scale, are not responsible for the observed widespread declines of many other species. In contrast, there is extensive evidence that many species have been adversely affected by developments in farming practices.

Modern farming appears to represent the greatest threat to birds in Western Europe today. This is a problem for society at large, which determines the policies and economic conditions under which farmers operate. Finding a solution will not be easy and will not be helped by blaming everything on one factor, be it magpies or anything else.

Should our work ever suggest that magpies are, indeed, responsible for reducing the populations of other birds, then we shall draw that conclusion clearly to the attention of those responsible for wildlife policy. It is not for BTO to campaign for culls but to urge that the management of the countryside is based on sound evidence, not prejudice. JEREMY J D GREENWOOD, British Trust for Ornithology, Thetford, Norfolk

Sir: There seems to be only one way of reducing magpie numbers without harming other birds – the Larsen trap, invented in Denmark and more recently promoted by the Game Conservancy Trust at Fordingbridge – which will supply plans and essential components. My Larsen trap caught 78 magpies in two seasons (March to July). I dispatched them humanely with a high-powered air rifle.

Each trap requires a decoy bird, a live magpie, readily available at the beginning of the season from nearby farmers, and replaced by trapped birds to keep the captivity short. It needs to be fed and watered, of course.

The reduction in magpie numbers in my garden has been matched by the increase in the songbird population. I now shoot the rare visiting magpie, with a 12-bore high-energy cartridge and No 4 shot, from cover – they are wary birds. I am reluctant to kill them, but more reluctant to see them tearing songbird parents to pieces. PETER HILL, Tamworth-in-Arden, Warwickshire

### Gaelic voters

Sir: My sympathies to Stephen Goodwin ("Nationalists play for real in battle for Isles", 21 April), who felt "frozen out" by the quixotic decision of Anne Lorne Gillies, herself a Gaelic speaker, to talk to the voters of South Uist and Eriskay in their native language. Such signs of individuality should be stamped out wherever they are encountered – they'll be wanting their own country next. PENNY ROBINSON, Sub-Dean, University of Leeds







## Are we really becoming less co-operative?

**Co-operation.** It is a nice word – the idea that people do things together, helping each other and thereby improving the lives of everyone. So different from competition, suggesting a fight for supremacy. You never hear of “cut-throat co-operation”, do you?

But co-operation, as far as UK economic endeavour is concerned, is in rapid retreat. You can see that retreat this week in the battle for the Co-operative Wholesale Society, the sprawling business conglomerate that runs the Co-op supermarkets, the bank and (an inspiration for countless bad jokes) the funeral parlours. A young entrepreneur called Andrew Regan is trying to launch a £1.2bn bid for the group. This has led to accusations of industrial espionage, payments to companies in the Cayman Islands, threats to call in the Serious Fraud Office and other expletives.

The bid may or may not succeed – it looks a bit flaky to me – but it would not be credible at all were it not for the Co-op's poor record. The bank does well, having cleverly used its non-mainstream status to attract customers sensitive to ethical issues. In the Fifties the Co-op completely dominated the retail grocery trade; now it occupies a small corner. Maybe the bid will succeed and the Co-op will face sudden death; even if it fails, the alternative looks more like death by a thousand cuts.

But it is not just in the Co-op itself that the co-operative dream is fading. Building societies are co-operatives founded so that people could save for their own homes, and in saving, help others to buy them. Yet in the space of 10 years almost that whole sector will have changed to shareholder control. Just this week Alliance & Leicester shares hit the stock market. Abbey National converted some years ago to the Halifax (the best of all) and the Woolwich are about to follow.

Even that other group of mutually-owned financial institutions, the life assurance companies, is now beginning to abandon co-operative status. It is not a bad rule to judge people on what they do rather than what they say. At the height of 19th-century capitalism people were busy forming co-operative institutions – they deliberately rejected the stock market as a form of ownership in favour of self-help. Now, at a time when it has become fashionable to criticise the supposedly harsh values of the stock market, and praise the “stakeholder” virtues of co-operation, exactly the opposite is happening. Institutions which have taken 100 years or more to build up in co-operative form are being converted to shareholder ownership, because people are voting for it. Meanwhile, no significant new co-operatives are being formed.

That last point is surely the killer. The commercial world is extraordinarily fluid. You would expect companies to rise and fall, to change their shape and their ownership. But you would also expect similar activity among new enterprises. Yet while there are enormous numbers of new

businesses being created, there does not seem to be the same energy in the co-operative sector. Why not?

There are several possible reasons. One is that the commercial sector, spurred by competition, has lifted its game. The Co-op stores are finding it tough because Tesco and Sainsbury are much better than they were 25 years ago, and they are better because the lidless eyes of the financial markets are driving them to be better. One or (in the case of the life assurance groups) two centuries ago, people needed new co-operative ventures because the quality of the commercial alternatives was at best uneven, and at worst dreadful. Now any new consumer desire will quickly be spotted and met.

That leads to a second change: the need for professional, specialised, driven management. It was a fairly straightforward business running a retail group or a financial institution two or three generations ago, and it was not difficult to attract quality management. Now management has become intensely specialised, and organisations without clear ownership seem to find it difficult to attract and retain these skills. Good people who might start co-ops seem to prefer to start their own businesses instead.

There is a practical example of the failure of co-operative management in the famed Meridian co-op which, backed by the then Labour government, took over Triumph motorcycles. It collapsed. But now, as *The Independent* reported last Saturday, the business has revived under a single, gifted owner and is successfully pushing back the frontiers of Japanese domination at the top of the market.

A rather different reason may be the growth of the state since the Second World War. The self-help ethos which founded the 19th-century co-operatives grew up in a period when there was no presumption that it was the job of government to take responsibility for encouraging home ownership or pension provision. So co-ops happened because if they didn't, nothing got done. Now it may still not get done, but there is a state to blame.

Will this change? I think it may. The idea of the co-operative is too good, too long-established, too attractive a concept to disappear for ever. There are small-scale co-op enterprises being founded now that never hit the headlines. A tiny number may grow into substantial businesses. They will be helped by other structural changes taking place in the economy: the ability of the Internet to link like-minded people together; the fall in the unit size needed to be successful in a business; maybe even the spur of the retreat of the state.

But if the movement is to revive, it will have to do so from the bottom up. It will happen because people want to co-operate, not because they are told to by some politician. What government can perhaps do is to remove roadblocks. Somewhere out there, maybe some future Co-operative Society is being created. We just haven't heard of it.



Hamish McRae

How do we nurture the values of the Co-op in a free market?

## Cry ‘God for Tony Blair, England and The Sun’

Europe or the tabloid, which will the Labour leader betray? His nationalistic tirade panders to Euro-sceptic prejudice and undermines our best interests, argues Andrew Marr

**“O**n the day we remember the legend that St George slayed a dragon to protect England, some will argue that there is another dragon to be slayed: Europe.

There is a weasel phrase there – “some will argue” – but in tone it is indistinguishable from anything by John Redwood, Norman Tebbit, Bill Cash or Michael Portillo. In the relentlessly nationalistic tirade that follows, the author promises to slay any European federalist dragon, so that England can be strong, building a Europe “on Britain's terms”. It comes from an article in yesterday's *Sun* and the author was Tony Blair.

It goes much further than “reclaiming the enemy's tunes”. The impression given is the fashionable one that Europe is all threat. Nowhere was there a mitigating word of praise, however faint, for the European Union.

That, I suppose, would be “inappropriate” for the audience of *Sun* readers. Blair has often sounded more pro-European, but when speaking to different audiences. One message for one group of readers on Europe, another for another. Does this ring any bells?

Alarm bells, obviously – but there's also a faint chime reverberating over the years. I remember, in particular, a Conservative Party conference.

In a seaside hotel, I bumped into one of the most pro-European Tory MPs in the party, and then later had a drink with a fiercely Euro-sceptic right-winger from the “No Turning Back” group. Coincidentally, both had seen the same (fading, little-known) minister that day and both were impressed. Why? Because he had given both of them the impression that he had agreed 100 per cent with their views. He was then Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and his name was John Major.

Today, Tony Blair's Minister for his weak leadership, his failures of party management, and the whole country knows what he means. But how did Major come to seem weak?

It was because he thought the best way of dealing with a divided party was to tell the different factions that, deep down, he was on their side. He was agreeable to the harshest. That was why they became disruptive bastards. He was winningly pally and reassuring with the pro-Europeans. That is why they feel betrayed.

By failing to make his own views sufficiently clear, the Prime Minister thus made it inevitable that he would have to take special account of whichever Tory faction won the struggle for hearts and minds. You may say that the argument about nationality and power was good for the country as a whole, however damaging it was for the Tory party. But in brief, that is the short story of how Major the leader became Major the follower.

No one is suggesting that the Labour Party today is in anything like the same state as the Tories were when Major became leader.



Wrapped in the flag: Tony Blair and his dragon-slaying message to ‘Sun’ readers yesterday

The great difference is that most of Blair's Euro-scepticism are ideological rather than removed from the Blair project; whereas the Tory Euro-sceptics are often young, including many new candidates; and are close to the ideological heart of their party.

Yet Blair's people, during their long years in the wilderness, were heartened by the social programme of the EU. Quite a few of them served in the Strasbourg parliament, as MEPs or aides. And anyway, they don't tend to have the rhinoceros-faced angst about national destiny that is ingrained in every proper Tory.

But if Blair can ignore, at least for the time being, the likelihood of a serious party split on Europe, there is the rather larger question of the direction of the country. Yesterday's press conferences by Labour and the Conservatives confirmed a general impression of a desperate “more-sceptic-than-thou” competition – a headlong flight away from Europe.

Don'tless this was fuelled by messages from target voters. This week, soft Labour voters and soft Tory voters are thought to be winning by the party which offers most nationalist-patriotic reassurance. Apart from the Liberal Democrats, no one has the courage to stand against the tide and speak up for what used to be thought plain common sense. Kenneth Clarke is obliged to fume

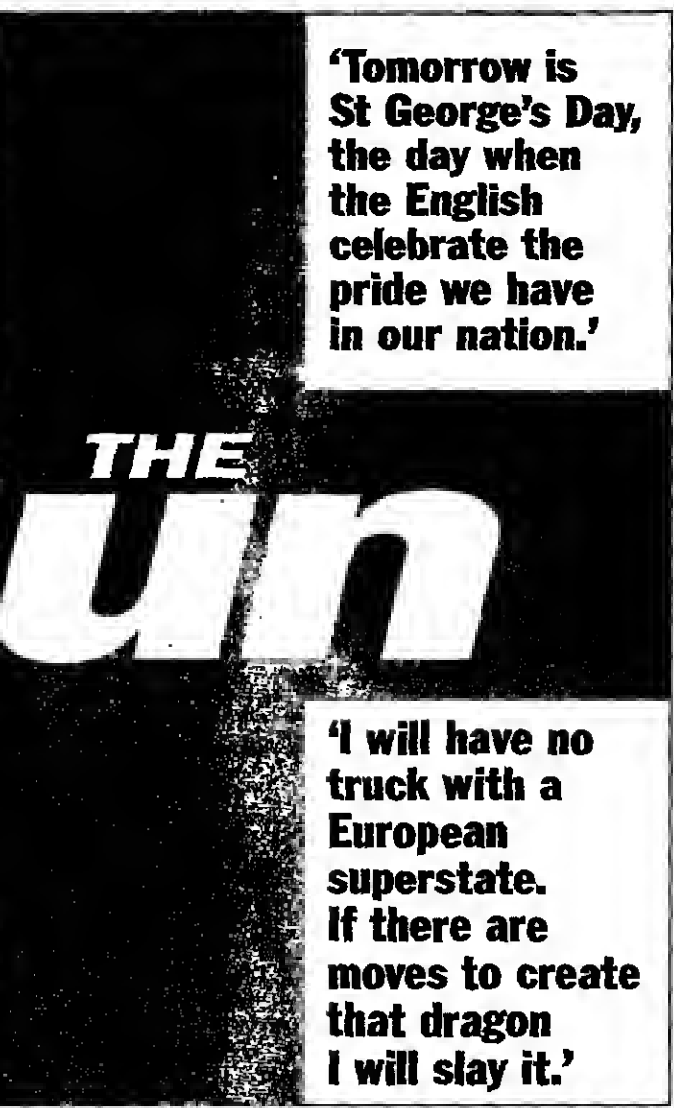
silently. The Labour pro-Europeans keep their mouths shut too. And so the tide flows over both, leaving only bubbles to mark where they stood.

You don't need to be an enthusiast for the single currency, or a federalist, to be worried. People are constantly told that the “EU” is a scary, fire-breathing threat, a danger which needs to be stood up to, then we cannot, as a country, stay in it forever.

That is worth pausing over. Without better, more balanced and wiser political leadership than we are seeing in this campaign, we cannot stay fully within the bloc that takes 57 per cent of our exports and provides 55 per cent of our imports; which was directly responsible for 30 per cent of our inward investment last year (more than Japan, and securing or creating 32,000 jobs). Business is overwhelmingly in favour of the EU, however irritated companies are about some of its bureaucracy.

But politicians, cowed by a handful of millionaires and xenophobic newspapers, haven't the guts to stand up for it. Instead of mimicking the Tory rhetoric, Labour could have been championing an alternative democratic agenda for the EU, speaking loudly about opening up the Council of Ministers, reforming the Commission and reassessing the role of the Parliament.

Many of us are genuinely sceptical



Wrapped in the flag: Tony Blair and his dragon-slaying message to ‘Sun’ readers yesterday

cal about the single currency and see the need for some clear and final definition of the “ever-closer union”. We understand the fear of being politically swamped, and the need for vibrant national and local democracy. Where true radicals differ from the Euro-sceptics is that we don't only want to defend national politics; we want to make British democracy really worth defending, by taking it away from the hands of focus group organisers and late-night cabals in the whips' offices of the House of Commons.

“Europe” cannot be separated from these domestic concerns: finch from Europe and you start retreating back from reform into nostalgic, flag-waving, *Gormenghast* politics. It's no coincidence that the fiercest British enemies of the EU have been those on the right who uncritically and unhistorically worship Westminster

absolutism and the self-congratulatory, incompetent old establishment that goes with it.

Whatever his other views, I had always thought that Tony Blair wanted to lead us away from all that. I thought I knew that much. No, I said to friends, in the end he will turn out to be a radical not a conservative. He'll be brave. He'll lead, not simply follow the fashion. Now, writing this in anger and bemusement, I no longer feel sure. How can modernity and pro-Europeanism be compatible with sentences like the one which opened Blair's article and which stands at the head of this one? How?

Yes, this is an election campaign. In power, it might be very different. But it seems to me that Blair will have to choose between betraying the whole emotional tone of his *Sun* article; and betraying our nation's better future.

## Seven out of ten in the UK die without a Will

**F**ew people expect to pass away in the near future – most of us have every expectation of going on for years. Perhaps this is the reason seven out of ten people in this country die without ever making a Will.

There are other reasons of course. Will making is often thought to be time-consuming and complicated – this is not always the case. Sometimes there are issues which are difficult to discuss with family members.

Others assume that, even without a Will, when they die, their wife or husband will automatically inherit all their money and possessions.

Not true.

**M**aking a Will – and keeping it up to date – is essential to safeguard your loved ones.

If you are married, your property may not necessarily pass in its entirety to your husband or wife, unless you make a Will leaving him or her everything.

If you are unmarried, none of your property will pass to your surviving partner unless you make a Will.

If you die without leaving a Will, the law provides that certain relatives, including brothers, sisters, parents, cousins, aunts and uncles might be entitled to your estate. It leaves a horrible mess – at a time when the people you leave behind, and hoped to be able to support, are least able to cope.

When you marry, any Will you made previously may become null and void. If you

divorce, any provision made for your previous spouse is cancelled. The birth of a child or a death in the family could mean you should amend an existing Will. A significant increase or reduction in the value of your personal assets could require an amendment to any existing Will. If you die without leaving a Will and you have no relatives, your entire estate will go to the government.

Making a Will – and keeping it up to date – is absolutely vital if you want to ensure that the needs of your loved ones are catered for to the event of your death.

**Have you made a Will? Is your Will up to date?**

WWF have published a free guide to Will making which outlines, clearly, the issues you need to bear in mind when preparing a Will and explains some of the more confusing jargon associated with Wills and bequests.

It also describes how you can go about making a bequest to charity – in particular WWF-UK.

Remember, having an out-of-date Will is little better than having no Will at all. This free booklet is essential reading if you care about your family and friends – it's also important for your own peace of mind.

So, send for your free guide today, which you can request by calling 01488 426445 or writing to Sally Burrows, Legacies Officer, WWF-UK, FREEPOST, Panda House, Godalming, Surrey GU7 1BR. Please also remember to quote reference IN26.

## Why I will vote for the Lib Dems

one-in

**T**wo conditions characterise this general election: the poverty and deprivation in which a growing number of children, families and single men and women live; and the laws to which both Conservative and Labour parties are committed, which, in their scope and implications, surpass even the emergency powers of the national government during the Second World War.

As *The Economist* has said: “The legal powers of the British government now extend far beyond what other established democracies consider tolerable... public officials have been granted breathtakingly wide powers.”

These powers are: the Criminal Justice Act, the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act, the Crime (Sentences) Act, the Asylum and Immigration Acts and the Police Act.

During this general election the prison minister, Ann Widdecombe, has banned Emma Nicholson, the Liberal Democrat MP, from returning to Campfield House, a notorious detention centre for asylum seekers, and from visiting any detention centre, immigration centre or prison service establishment, including Dartmoor in her own constituency. Ms Nicholson is opposition spokesman for prison-related subjects and for human rights, and the Liberal Democrats are committed to opposition and repeal of the Asylum and Immigration Acts.

All my life, I've voted Labour. The history of the Labour Party still moves my instincts to vote Labour. But the Labour Party has ceased to exist. With the passing of the Police Bill, UK citizens

and asylum seekers have lost all the civil/human rights fundamental to democracy, with the exception of trial by jury. The Labour Party supports all this legislation. Labour further promises to reduce the statutory age by which a child can be tried on criminal charges. Both parties are committed to locking up into secure training units (to be managed by Group 4 Security) youngsters who have committed three offences.

The European Court of Human Rights has found the British government in breach of its convention 43 times, more than any other government. Never have so many human rights organisations, charities, law-firms, solicitors, church commissions and even government-appointed commissioners protested and reported so emphatically against the conditions and the laws passed since the last election.

The Conservative Party proclaims “Britain is booming”. On 6 April the *Sunday Times* named 1997 a “Vintage Year for Wealth”.

Facts and figures tell the other side of this story: child poverty and malnutrition; loss of health and homes; unemployed youngsters; desperate conditions for pensioners; the disabled and the mentally ill; women committed for offences involving poverty; deaths in police cells; imprisonment and criminalisation of those seeking refuge from war, famine and dictatorship.

The Eurostar Labour Force survey shows 20.6 per cent of households with children in the UK have no wage-earners, the highest percentage in the EU



by Vanessa Redgrave

All my life I have voted Labour. But that Labour Party has ceased to exist

(France, 8.8 per cent, Germany, 8.4 per cent). Research for the 1997 report *The Hunger Within* shows that 2.35 million schoolchildren (five to 19 years old) please note, Mr Blair) in families on income support are deprived. Figures for Family Credit show 1.3 million more children are only marginally better off.

There is no national screening programme for malnutrition, so children under four cannot even be reached. Calcium, vitamin D and iron deficiencies have brought back TB and rickets.

There is a causal connection between poverty and deprivation, “scarring asset values”, and the laws that have deprived UK citizens of their fundamental rights. I can tell it simply with the story of the British-Asian Hillingdon Hospital workers. Six months after the hospital contracted out cleaning services to Rail Mail, these women were ordered to accept a 20 per cent wage cut with loss of sick pay. There was nothing they or their trade union could do within the law, to prevent other workers being employed at Hillingdon at lower wages and/or as part-time workers.

The Criminal Justice Act together with the Police Act make “aggravated trespass” out of peaceful pickets, and marches or demonstrations into criminal offences. There is a new definition of serious crime: “conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common cause”.

There is to be a National Crime Squad (NCS Service Authority) and a National Criminal Intelligence Service. Citizens can be bugged in their homes, their offices or their solicitors' offices,

and their documents purloined. They have no right of appeal, and the judiciary are deprived of their powers to control or authorise such activities.

It is for these reasons that the Charter for Basic Rights was started. I am proud to campaign for this charter, along with Harold Pinter, Edward Bond, Helena Kennedy QC and Gareth Peirce, the courageous solicitor, among others. The charter is not a political party – we will continue to campaign for repeal of all the Acts of Parliament already mentioned, along with the anti-trade union laws, and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. We call for unconditional all-party talks for an end to the war in Northern Ireland and for the release of political prisoners on both sides, as happened in the Middle East peace accord.

I shall vote Liberal Democrat in the constituency where I live, because of their opposition to the Asylum and Immigration Acts and the Criminal Justice Act, which in my view are the cornerstones of the present police state powers. Oscar Schindler and Varian Fry, the two anti-Nazis who saved the lives of Jews and opponents of the Nazis by giving jobs and false documents to escape the Gestapo, would be criminals today in Britain.

I do not consider a vote for the Liberal Democrats as “lost”, nor should it be renounced for tactical reasons. In the coming months we all need every Schindler and Fry there is, in or outside the EU.

The Charter for Basic Rights is at 112 Upper Tooting Road, London SW17 7EN.



# business & city

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## Scandal-ridden Nomura says 'sayonara' to its entire board



Michael Harrison

The president of the scandal-ridden Japanese securities house, Nomura, resigned yesterday along with the rest of the 16-strong board in the most dramatic and sweeping resignation ever witnessed by Japan's financial community.

Massashi Suzuki, who only took up the post a month ago following the forced departure of his predecessor, said he too had to accept responsibility for the racketeering scandal that has wrecked the reputation of Japan's biggest securities firm. "Nomura is ex-

periencing the worst crisis since it was founded," Mr Suzuki said darkly as he announced his resignation.

The scandal broke two months ago after it emerged that Nomura had been paying sums into accounts linked with a racketeering organisation, collectively known as *sokaiya*, to avoid its annual shareholders' meeting being disrupted.

Yesterday Nomura's former president disclosed that it had paid more than ¥70m in stocks into accounts linked with the racketeer. Testifying before a committee of Japan's Upper House of Parliament, Hideo Sakamaki, who stepped down last month, said investigators had discovered five irregular stock deals through which the money was routed, one of which involved the transfer of shares in a commercial bank.

Meanwhile, there were Japanese press reports yesterday that the Ministry of Finance will suspend some of Nomura's operations, including the ability to deal in shares on its own account, for three months as punishment. The developing scandal has already prompted the de-

fection of some of Nomura's clients, robbing it of large broking fees and further tarnishing its reputation.

The 15 board members who stepped down yesterday alongside Mr Suzuki included five executive vice-presidents and four senior managing directors. Two directors have already been dismissed for their involvement in the payoffs.

Speaking at a news conference, Mr Suzuki said he had hoped to take Nomura's management into the next generation after regaining public trust. But he said the current situation was

so serious that more sweeping action was needed, hence his resignation.

The firm's new president will be Junichi Ujii, a managing director of Nomura who holds a doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago and ran the firm's New York-based Nomura Securities International from 1992 until 1996. He said his task would be to reshape the culture of Nomura. "It is important to establish a management system which is transparent and facilitates open discussion," he said. Mr Ujii added that there was an atmos-

phere within the firm that discourages managers from talking freely.

Ties between Japanese companies and *sokaiya* have long been a problem but Nomura has become the most spectacular victim of links with racketeers.

Nomura employs 11,000 staff around the world and is Japan's biggest brokerage, dominating both share and bond trading. It has its foundation in an Osaka money-changing shop set up in 1872 by Rokushichi Nomura whose son grew the business and incorporated it as a bank in 1925.

## Japanese bank backs £1.5bn Regan Co-op bid

Nigel Cope and Chris Hughes

The battle for control of the Co-op took a fresh turn yesterday when it emerged that Nomura International, the Japanese bank, had agreed to fully underwrite £1.5bn of debt funding to back Andrew Regan's audacious break-up bid.

News of the funding came as the Co-operative Wholesale Society carried out its threat of contacting the Serious Fraud Office regarding a £2m payment made by Mr Regan to a Cayman Islands company two years ago.

As accusations flew regarding a continued surveillance operation including phone tapping, the filming of private meetings and tailing of key personnel one industry commentator said: "The Co-op is now in play. If Andrew Regan doesn't get it, someone else will. It is a pretty obvious target."

Mr Regan's bid plan, which is being conducted through an offshoot of his quoted vehicle Lanica Trust, would be worth around £1.5bn in total. This would include a £1,000 payment to the 500,000 members of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. It would also include a one-off £10m payment to the Co-operative Union, the CWS administrative centre, to use for funding "good causes".

Nomura was putting the finishing touches to its financing deal last Friday when it heard of the High Court injunction

banning the use of confidential documents. The bank said yesterday it did not have any such information in its possession. It is thought Nomura is keen to go ahead if the injunction is lifted at a court hearing on Friday.

CWS representatives visited the SFO yesterday regarding a £2m payment made by Hobson, a food company that was formerly controlled by Regan, to a Cayman Islands middle man. The payment was made to Ronald Zimet in return for negotiating an extension to a supply agreement between Hobson and the CWS. The CWS contacted the SFO after assurances from Mr Regan failed to satisfy the Co-op's legal advisers.

In a letter explaining the payment to Graham Melmoth, chief executive of the CWS, Mr Regan said: "Ronald Zimet of Trellis International acted on

behalf of Hobson in assisting with and conducting negotiations with the CWS concerning some weeks before the extension [to supply the CWS] was finally agreed. Hobson had not succeeded in negotiating an extension without assistance. Hobson took the view that to help avoid jeopardising its position with the CWS by further efforts to work without assistance, it could usefully involve Mr Zimet."

Regarding the involvement of Allan Green, the CWS retailing controller who was suspended last week, Mr Regan said: "Mr Green attended at least one meeting with Mr Zimet at which I was present. The meeting took place on 11 January 1995." Mr Green has said the negotiations were held direct with Mr Regan and denies any knowledge of Trellis or Mr Zimet.

Mr Regan closes by saying he was given legal advice that it was not necessary to disclose the payment to the CWS.

In a caustic response, Mr Melmoth said: "The facts are these: On 19 January [1995] you were still negotiating directly with Mr Green. The deal was done on 24 January, the documents were signed on 25 January and the payments were made on 26 January. Mr Zimet got his instructions from you late on 19 January. Then miraculously, only three days later, Mr Zimet announces that he has overcome the intractable negotiating problem you say you

faced. The deal was done within hours and you pay him £2.4m. I find that extraordinary."

In a separate development yesterday, the Regan camp won an extension to the deadline requiring it to file affidavits in the High Court detailing what confidential information it had obtained on the CWS and the use to which it would be put. The initial deadline was set for 4pm yesterday. However after a brief hearing in court Justice Timothy Lloyd granted an extension to 10am today. The CWS opposed the extension.

Mr Regan's counsel said the extension was required to complete and check work undertaken to comply with the order.

The CWS yesterday denied it still had a surveillance operation on the Regan camp. It repeated that it had called off security experts, Control Risks, last Friday.

Mr Regan still has to satisfy the Bank of England's strict criteria on bank ownership in order to buy the whole of the CWS, including the Co-operative Bank. Under the Banking Act it is required that all parties who have even a 10 per cent controlling interest in a bank must be passed "fit and proper". Even though Mr Regan would effectively be warehousing the bank before selling it on he would still have to pass this test.

However, the Bank of England is required to have solid grounds for a refusal.

Comment, page 23

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## British businessman who has interests around the world

Ronald Zimet, the businessman who received a £2m "negotiation fee" from Andrew Regan in 1995, has a web of business interests across the world, writes Nigel Cope.

Though he is described as British his address is listed in Tel Aviv and he was understood to be in Israel yesterday.

Aged 51, he is a director of Investment Management and Finance, an asset management company based in Geneva, a non-executive director of Inventech, an industrial venture capital company based in Israel, and a director of Wrapco, a Dutch company. Trellis International, the company to

which the payment from Mr Regan was made, is registered in the Cayman Islands.

His one UK directorship is as non-executive chairman of Freepages, a provider of telephone information services which is listed on the Alternative Investment Market. The company came to the

market in February 1996 through a £30m reverse takeover of Blage, the building materials group. Priced at 12p the shares have almost quadrupled and Freepages is now worth £220m. Mr Zimet is one of the largest individual shareholders with a 15 per cent stake worth £33m.

Owen Oyston, the Blackpool entrepreneur who was convicted of rape last year, used to have a near 10 per cent stake in Blage and a small holding in Freepages. However, the company says he no longer appears on the shareholder register.

No one at Freepages' Oxfordshire offices was able to supply any additional information on Mr Zimet yesterday. The company's public relations advisers also had no details beyond a brief biographical statement.

However, it is expected that he will soon give his version of events that led to the £2m payment in return for helping to negotiate an extension to a contract between the CWS and Hobson, Mr Regan's former food company.

As a Freepages spokesman said: "His name has been dragged through the mud on this so I would think he would like to say something."

## Halifax float nears completion as trading set to start in June

Nic Ciccotti

Halifax Building Society yesterday moved into the final furling of its lengthy flotation process as it announced that trading in its shares will begin on Monday 1 June.

More than 8 million individual members of the society will receive letters over the next two weeks telling them how many free shares they stand to receive, with those eligible in line for a minimum of 200 shares worth an estimated £900.

Members will be sent detailed instructions outlining how they should claim their shares and the choices they have for keeping or selling them.

Mike Blackburn, the society's chief executive, urged prospective shareholders to fill in the forms needed to claim their shares and send them back: "We cannot allocate free shares to any member until we receive their claim form confirming that they are entitled to [them]."

Analysts yesterday suggested that in the wake of the surge in the price of Alliance & Leicester shares on Monday, well above estimates a few months ago, Halifax shares could easily rise above earlier predictions.

The extent to which this might happen would depend on the availability of shares at flotation, with low numbers of sellers potentially forcing prices up.

Kathryn Newton, banking analyst at UBS, the Swiss banking group, said: "The value of Halifax shares will depend a lot on the auction process. If there were fewer 'carpetbaggers' [more likely to sell quickly], that could put prices up."

But she added that Halifax shares might equally trade far closer to their fundamental value, depending on the number of people indicating that they wish to offload their free entitlement immediately.

Unlike A&L's flotation, Merrill Lynch and Cazenove, joint brokers for Halifax, will set a public price below which no share will be sold.

The mechanism for selling the shares will differ from A&L's three-stage auction. The book-building process will take place once, on the Friday prior to flotation, and once a day thereafter for as long as necessary.

Next week, Halifax aims to publish the minimum price it expects its shares to be sold at. Earlier estimates by the society have ranged from 390p to 430p.

In the run-up to conversion, the society will invite institutional investors to make bids for parcels of shares. The prices then paid to members will represent the weighted average of the price bid by the institutions.

A spokeswoman said: "We believe that selling shares in this way ensures all members are

treated fairly and equally and receive the best price available at the time their shares are sold."

Halifax said yesterday it would attempt to obtain at least the minimum price, which it will publish on Monday, on behalf of a member selling his or her shares. If that amount is not available on conversion, the shares will not be sold.

## Alliance shares retreat but auction price rises

Clifford Gorman

The price of Alliance & Leicester shares fell 23.3p to 533p yesterday, but the average price paid in the second auction of unwanted shares on Monday rose to 551p, up 23p on the price in the first auction last Friday.

After the first two auctions the running average price received is 536p, with the result of the final auction, which took place last night, to come.

The top bid in the second auction was 575p, and the lowest 534p, but unlike the first auction when only 36 bids were received there were 147 separate bids – the largest for 8.5 million shares at 568p.

Cazenove, broker to the share issue, declined to reveal whether lower bids were received but did confirm that all the 52.3 million shares in the second auction were sold.

The 640,000 investors who decided to sell their shares at auction will know this morning the average of all three auction prices which will determine the price they receive.

The result of the third auction will give the new bank a clearer idea of whether any significant stakes have been accumulated, which could indicate the early presence of a potential bidder.

Although institutions were free to make multiple bids at dif-

ferent prices at auction, there is no clear evidence that the shares sold so far have fallen into the hands of a single determined buyer.

Excluding the 52 million shares from the auction, the number of A&L shares traded yesterday fell to around 7 million, although this included many thousands of small deals.

The experience of Alliance & Leicester will be closely studied by Halifax, Northern Rock, Woolwich, and the insurer Norwich Union, which have yet to decide whether to follow suit and allow small shareholders to pre-allocate shares when they float on the stock market later this year.

Comment, page 25

STOCK MARKETS				
FTSE 100	Dow Jones	Nikkei	Hang Seng	Hong Kong
4346.10	+17.40	+0.4	4444.30	4096.90
4346.10	-4.80	-0.1	4729.40	4469.40
4346.10	+6.30	+0.3	2194.30	2017.90
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	2274.20	2178.29
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	2163.54	1969.78
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	2095.18	3032.64
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	1946.00	17305.05
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	1388.24	12056.17
4346.10	+5.67	+0.3	3460.50	2948.77

INTEREST RATES				
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	3 month Euro	6 month Euro
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75
5.75	7.50	7.50	5.75	5.75

CURRENCIES				
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	DM/\$	¥/\$
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109
1.6368	1.6368	1.5113	0.6109	0.6109

# United wins power contract in Argentina

United Utilities has won its first large overseas electricity privatisation contract, the North West-based group announced yesterday, as part of a consortium to operate power supplies in Buenos Aires in Argentina, writes Chris Godsmark.

The consortium is paying \$404m (£252m) to take over one of three power companies in Buenos Aires for a concession lasting 95 years. United Utilities has a 45 per cent stake in the consortium, alongside Camuzzi, an Italian gas distribution company and Loma Negra, Argentina's

The consortium put in bids for all three areas to be privatised after the single state electricity concern, Eseba, was split up.

The Atlantic concession serves about 390,000 customers. United said the infrastructure taken over was in good condition, although there was "considerable scope" for efficiency improvements.

United's overseas ambitions came unstuck last month when it announced it would set aside £83m to cover extra costs from a sewerage contract





COMMENT

This payment is not a sideshow. It is symbolic of what this break-up bid is all about. It is not right that the CWS riches should be plundered for the benefit of a small group of asset stripping insiders.

# The City will not profit from backing Regan

Andrew Regan's attempts to launch a takeover bid for the Cooperative Wholesale Society have gone far enough. Hambros, Schroders and other top drawer City backers for this ambitious endeavour would be well advised to withdraw their support now before it is too late. Already they have done themselves not insignificant reputational harm by leading their names to this attempted act of piracy. If they might reasonably have failed to anticipate the extent of public distaste for what they are doing, they must by now be very aware of it. To persist would be to play fast and loose with their good names.

This is a disreputable enterprise pursued for disreputable purposes. It may be thought common enough for City folk to earn £2.4m for three days work (though if the truth be known it is actually extremely uncommon even within the confines of the Square Mile), but nobody is going to believe outside the world of high finance that lottery style winnings like this can be legitimately earned. Graham Melmoth, the Co-op's chief executive, speaks the language of the ordinary man in his letter expressing incredulity at Mr Regan's explanation for this payment.

The matter is out, as the Regan camp would like us to believe, a sideshow and a distraction from the wider debate over the Co-op's future. It goes to the heart of matter and it is indicative of why so many people feel such a strong sense of revulsion for this escapade. The legitimacy or otherwise

of the payment is beside the point, though Mr Regan's explanation of it does bear a quite uncanny similarity to the explanation given by Ernest Saunders of his payment of £5.2m to Tom Ward in the Guinness affair. The Guinness payment was found to be an illegal payment and there is no suggestion of that here. However, then as now the justification advanced was for invaluable advice and assistance in a commercial endeavour. Then as now the overriding question is how anyone, however brilliant and accomplished, could possibly be worth such staggeringly large amounts of money for so little work. It makes "excess" in executive pay look positively reasonable.

No, this payment is not a sideshow. It is symbolic of what this takeover bid is all about. The CWS has no doubt been a very poorly run company for a very long time. But it contains within it assets and reserves built up over generations through honest toil and endeavour. It is not right that such riches should be so easily plundered for the benefit of such a small group of asset stripping insiders. A mill here, a mill there for a few hours easy work - such will be the division of spoils if the Trellis payment is anything to go by. Don't let him do it.

Privatisation issues do funny things to investors but building society flotations, where it really is a case of money for nothing, provoke even odder behaviour. Yesterday among the cascade of bargains being done in Alliance & Leicester stock were a smattering of trades involving fewer than 50 shares and one that involved just eight. Even at £5.66 a share that is hardly worth getting out of bed and going down to the local share shop for.

Much better to have ticked the box saying you want your windfall in green folding stuff now and let Cazenove get on with it. The sharp rise in the A & L's share price in first day dealings gave the fleeting impression that those who held onto their 250 free shares would do rather better than those who chose to take part in the great Caz auction. Yesterday's equally sharp drop in the price suggests otherwise.

Unless the last of the three share auctions has gone terribly wrong then those who sold out look like having done so at pretty much the market price. A smart investor might have made a killing by selling in the market on Monday but even then it would have been mighty small - £70 at most, after dealing costs, on a windfall worth more than £1,300.

The interesting question is whether the A&L's experience, where 27 per cent of shareholders opted to sell immediately, will set the trend for all the other societies taking the demutualisation route this summer. There is already a frisson in the air. The Halifax, the daddy of them all with 8.5m members against the A&L's 2.3m, is writing to all qualifying customers warning them that

they will lose their chance to benefit from the issue altogether if their forms are not in by 26 May.

Based on the A&L experience, there seems little incentive to do anything other than take the money and run. The theory was that prices would inevitably rise under the law of supply and demand. Since the big pension funds and other investment institutions would need to buy to adjust their weightings, there would be heavy demand for the shares. Thus far this doesn't seem to be happening, or if it is there is not much effect on the share price.

It's in the nature of financial markets, politicians and commentators alike to get so tangled up in minutiae that they lose sight of the broader picture. The budget deficit trees are once again obscuring the forest. The obsession with whether or not various countries' 1997 government deficits will be just below or just above 3 per cent, the magic Maastricht number, is distracting attention from the important question, which is whether or not the single currency will work.

The targets for economic convergence, which include the 3 per cent deficit ceiling, were deliberately set out with some flexibility. It would be madness to pin a country's chances of joining the single currency on the bogus precision of one year's figures. Nothing in the economy is that precise.

A budget deficit is the difference between two extremely large and variable numbers, tax revenues and government spending. Taking it as a ratio of GDP means dividing it by a third very large number which will, with certainty, be revised substantially as the months go by. There is no essential difference between 2.9 per cent and 3.2 per cent in this case.

And though the markets ebb and flow to the unmet movements in these numbers, the big economic picture has not changed. The core countries, France and Germany, are struggling to get their economies into shape for a sustainable monetary union. They can manage it if they really want to. The political will to do so on the part of their governments remains.

What has changed, perhaps, is the degree of political opposition to the necessary economic medicine within both France and Germany. This is why President Chirac wants early elections and why Chancellor Kohl might struggle to get tax reforms through parliament.

When Britain underwent a combination of fiscal retrenchment and structural economic reform in the 1980s, there were violent strikes and regular inner city riots. A government has to be sure about where it wants to end up to set off down this path. This debate is what the fretting about tiny differences in deficit forecasts is really about - the degree of pain between here and 1 January 1999.

## Kohl pushes for tax reforms to cut deficit for EMU

Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

The German government remained confident yesterday that it could reduce its budget deficit by enough to qualify for the single European currency, despite the prospect that talks on tax reform plans with opposition politicians due today would break down.

The political manoeuvres came as the country's six leading economic institutes urged the government to clarify its tax and spending plans, predicting Germany would just miss the per cent limit without further moves.

"Uncertainty about achieving the Maastricht criteria and doubts about the consistency of fiscal policies have in fact led to misunderstandings that have considerably burdened the economic climate," the report said.

Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, reacted by saying: "The government will do everything necessary to reach this target. Decisions would be taken after the latest figures for tax receipts in mid-May, he said.

The economic institutes have cut their forecast for growth this year to 2.25 per cent from 2.5 per cent previously, mainly due to higher-than-expected unemployment. They continue to expect a pick-up later in the year but see little sign of a reduction in joblessness until 1998.

Their forecast for unemployment in 1997, at 4.28 million, is about 80,000 higher than the government's own prediction. This alone accounts for an extra DM2bn (£700m) in public



Taxing times: The SPD could hold up Kohl's reforms

spending. The institutes reckon the government budget deficit will be between 3 and 3.2 per cent of GDP this year, the decisive year for qualifying for the single currency at its launch in 1999. The government's own forecast is of a 2.9 per cent deficit.

Predictions from the European Commission today are expected to share the government's view that it will scrape under the ceiling, but separate forecasts from the International Monetary Fund will be more critical about the lack of

progress on deficit reduction in Germany, France and Italy.

Chancellor Kohl plans to introduce a tax reform this summer, cutting income taxes by DM30bn, but financing this and raising additional revenues through higher taxes on spending. The cabinet approved the plan yesterday, but the opposition SPD could hold up the tax reform in the upper house of the parliament.

Yet other economists shared the government's underlying confidence. "It is technically still possible to meet the 3 per cent target. The question is what policies will be adopted," said Holger Fahrnkug, at investment bank UBS in Frankfurt.

Chris Goldco at Nomura in London said the government had enough scope to meet the target, but doing so by raising taxes would be problematic. "It would be ridiculous to rule out EMU on the basis of giving 0.2 per cent outside the target.

## Cordiant may opt for Zenith poison pill

Terry Macalister

Cordiant, the advertising group which announced a three-way split of its operations on Monday, has admitted it might place pre-emptive rights over shares in its Zenith Media Worldwide subsidiary.

Bob Seclert, Cordiant's chief executive, said no decision had been taken about pre-emption rights which could be used as a "poison pill" defence against predators.

Cordiant's position on the is-

sue would be outlined in the merger prospectus which would be launched ahead of a special shareholder meeting in October, said Mr Seclert.

The company is looking for a partner for Zenith. However, if a partner is found then, under current proposals, Zenith will be owned equally by Cordiant's other two businesses that are being demerged - the Saatchi & Saatchi advertising agency and the Bates marketing group.

Zenith has offices in 22 countries but is considered too small

to compete in the media buying sector, a business that entails an agency buying advertising space for clients.

Regardless of any poison pill, some industry experts question how attractive Zenith would be to a buyer. One said: "Zenith is interesting because of the accounts it holds. But what would stop those accounts moving back to its former parent company in the event of a takeover?"

The Cordiant demerger, which could formally take effect in December with the stock list-

ing of Saatchi & Saatchi and Bates in both London and New York, has put all three groupings into play as potential takeover targets.

One rival media services group said it would certainly take a look at the individual businesses. A senior executive said: "Everyone in the industry will be putting the [acquisition] slide rule over all these new companies."

Lorna Tibbitt, media analyst with Panmure Gordon, said: "Both [Saatchi and Bates] could

go in takeovers. It seems likely that a partner will be brought to Zenith so it can be feasted off."

But speculation about Saatchi & Saatchi and Bates as takeover targets was brushed aside by Mr Seclert. He said: "Frankly we do not see it that way. Both are robust companies that are perfectly capable of standing on their own."

Young & Rubicam, one of the US advertising groups linked by analysts as a possible future partner for Zenith, ruled itself out of the running yesterday.

## BREITLING 1884

More powerfully technical than ever, incorporating a variety of refinements suggested by demanding professionals, BREITLING's 1997 chronographs feature novel developments and even include a world first.



PREMIER

The NAVITIMER PREMIER chronograph traces its roots back to the late 1930s when BREITLING first began supplying chronographs to the Royal Air Force.

With its sleekly technical good looks, fitted with a cambered dial featuring oversized hour figures and providing instant legibility, it measures and displays short time spans on its 10-min. and 3-hr totalizers.



At the Fairford Air Tattoo in the U.K. this summer, BREITLING will host a competition unlike any other: hundreds of fighter pilots from all over the world will be vying for the first BREITLING FIGHTER CHALLENGE trophy, to be awarded to the most gifted "Top Gun" in simulated air combat.



CHRONOMAT

It set new styling standards right from its launch in 1984. Now a recognized classic among mechanical chronographs, the CHRONOMAT is available in a choice of two innovative styles that demonstrate the vast potential of one of the world's favorite instruments.



Following their initial attempt at flying around the world in a balloon, Bertrand Piccard and Wim Verstraeten will lift off again early next year aboard the BREITLING ORBITER 2, an all-new and even larger roziere-type balloon with a slightly modified capsule.



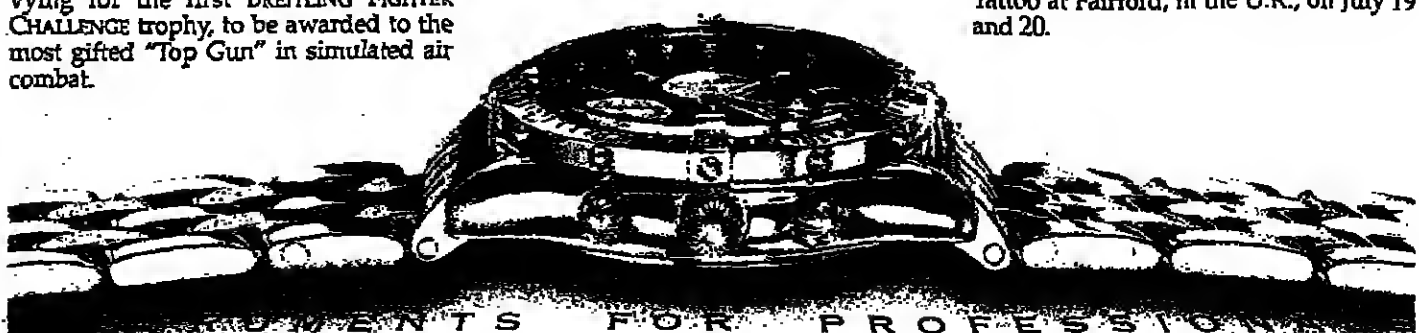
TWINSIXTY

A mechanical chronograph that displays the total minute count in two different ways ranks as a world first. The TwinSixty's new Caliber 39 movement shows the chronograph minutes either by a standard watch hand rotating around the dial (selective readings) or with the hours on a subdial (global readings). Water-resistant to 30 m (about 100 ft), this new NAVITIMER design also shows time military style (24-hr cycle).

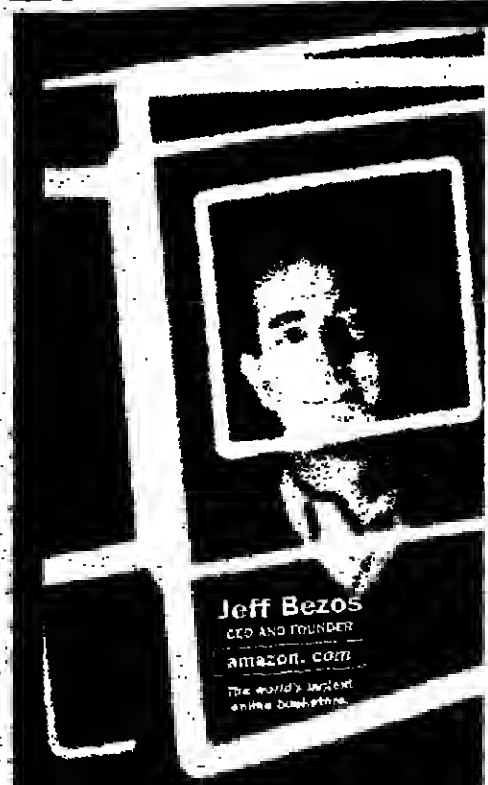


With 1997 definitely a banner year for aeronautics, BREITLING will be on hand for the USAF's 50th anniversary celebrations, not least at the International Air Tattoo at Fairford, in the U.K., on July 19 and 20.

CHRONO JETSTREAM

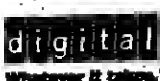


German economic outlook			
	1996	1997	1998
Growth %	2.25	2.25	2.75
Inflation %	2.25	2.25	2.75
Unemployed '000s	3,965	4,280	4,150
Unemployment rate %	10.3	11.2	10.9
Govt deficit % of GDP	3.8	3.2	2.3



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# Direct approach benefits St Ives

## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

St Ives, the printing group, believes in managing its businesses, rather than doing endless deals, which is a bit surprising since its chairman, Miles Emley, is a former deal-maker at the Rothschild merchant bank. By sticking to its last, the group has built market-leading positions in printing markets ranging from Bibles to the sleeves for CD-Rom discs by running a tight and well-invested ship.

That formula continued to deliver the goods in the latest half year to January when profits jumped by a fifth to £23.5m, more than the group made in the whole of 1992. The figures were muddled by exchange factors and a £1.68m maiden contribution from Perlmutter, the US direct response and commercial printer acquired in September, but underlying growth was still probably into double figures.

As ever, some of St Ives' cylinders fired better than others. Books was a flat market, with Bible exports hit by the strong pound and paperbacks showing little sign that the end of the not book agreement is boosting sales. Wurst printing the reams of documentation associated with City bids and deals has also gone quiet in the run-up to the general election, even if St Ives did pick up the massive Halifax Building Society conversion and the British Gas demerger. It is warning that the hiatus could continue for a while after May.

However, the cuts in pagination and delayed launch of titles which hit last year's results from the magazines division have reversed in the wake of the 20 per cent cut in paper prices over the past year. The Christmas decision by RR Donnelley of the US to close its York plant, one of the top five or six magazine printers in the UK, also brought a windfall in the shape of contracts for *Vogue*, *Top Gear* and in-house mags for Marks & Spencer and Sainsbury's Homebase. The troublesome new presses at the Capriol works are now nearly fixed – some two years after the first was commissioned.

But the real growth areas, where St Ives is concentrating its sales efforts, are in direct response, multimedia such as CD-Roms and so-called international corporate finance. It also continues actively to look abroad to extend all its interests. Perlmutter, picked up last year in the US, and Jöhler Druck of Germany, in for a full six months this time after its acquisition in 1995, are both in direct marketing. The former seems to be dovetailing well with St Ives' Florida operation, while plans to increase capacity by up to 12.5 per cent in Jöhler is indicative of the health of the German company and its markets.

Prodigious cash flow, equivalent to after-tax profits in the half year, should leave the company with net cash at the year-end. Profits of £47.5m would put the shares, up 3.5p to 545p, on a

forward multiple of 17. Booming consumer expenditure looks set to make up for thinner times in financial markets, but Mr Emley may need to work up another foreign deal to get the shares on the move again.

## DFS depends on new stores

There is only one problem with DFS Furniture according to Sir Graham Kirkham, the founder and executive chairman of this retailing phenomenon: it is too good to be true. Like all good jokes, this one carries the germ of truth within it.

Yesterday's interim figures to January, showing pre-tax profits up 24 per cent to £18.7m, were as excellent as Sir Graham believed and higher than City expectations. But most of the increase in sales, which soared 44 per cent to £126m, was propelled by new stores. Like-for-like growth through comparable stores grew by a meagre 3.3 per cent and Sir Graham said he had seen no sign of any great upturn in overall consumer spending.

This underlying figure may prove a cause for concern, especially with consumers almost certain to face higher interest rates immediately after the general election. But DFS is determined to protect itself by increasing its store openings in the South-east of the country.

It has created a Greater London bridgehead with three stores in New Malden, Sidcup and Croydon. It will supplement those by opening in Milton Keynes in August and Reading in October.

DFS had promised to open 15 to 20 stores in the three years from April 1995. It is now saying it will almost certainly exceed this figure.

Sir Graham insists that he operates a well-sprung machine that is built to withstand any prevailing commercial environment.

"DFS has never relied on a buoyant economy or a housing boom for its growth. Our success comes from winning market share," he booms.

That market share is currently 10 per cent, which leaves plenty of scope for expansion.

With strong cash flow to support expansion plans, there is room for both investment and more special divi-

dends, such as the 10p a share paid last year.

Sir Graham is not ruling out further payments, even if the interim has been lifted a chunky 26 per cent to 3.9p.

Graville Davies, the stockbroker, are pencilling in profits of £38m for this year. That would put the shares, up 17p to 549.5p, on a forward multiple of 23, which looks high enough for Doncaster's finest furniture retailer.

## McCarthy & Stone a good bet

McCarthy & Stone, the specialist builder of retirement homes, has had a long climb back from the low point of 1991-92 when the group lost £20m and the shares hit 18p.

They are still a long way short of the glory days of 1987, when the shares were nudging 600p, but pre-tax profits in the six months to the end of February have tripled to £6m. Even after stripping out one-off exceptional profits on disposals, the operating profit more than doubled to £5.5m.

The group sold 443 one or two-bed flats in the latest six-month period, 24 per cent more than at the same stage a year ago, and average selling prices rose by 8 per cent.

The stock of finished flats also rose from 945 in February last year to 1,200 a year later, but that is seen as a strong point ahead of the peak selling season in spring and summer, when two-thirds of sales take place.

It leaves the group well placed to cope with the increasingly visible recovery in the housing market, which will make it easier for retired couples to sell their family homes at a satisfactory price and move into specialised accommodation.

A modest rise in interest rates is no real threat because most buyers will not need a new mortgage, while it should help the company which currently has £5m in the bank.

The biggest problem is planning permission, but the group prides itself on its high success rate in reversing refusals at the appeal stage. Equally, the business should be largely election-proof since most local authorities are already either Labour or Liberal.

Reservations in the past few months are 35 per cent up on a year ago, and the medium-term prospects look good. Analysts have upped their forecasts for the year to September from £13.5m to £15.5m, excluding exceptional items of £1.5m, or a clean 9p of earnings, and from £17m to £19m or 10.9p of earnings in 1997-98.

The shares rose 9.5p to 129p yesterday, putting them on a forward p/e of 12. One of the safer bets in the current market.

# Continental bonuses on the menu at Warburg

## PEOPLE & BUSINESS

The heat is on for Allan Thistleton, a young chef who does the in-house catering for SBC Warburg. Allan has been selected as one of six finalists for the annual Roux Diners Club Scholarship. If he wins the "cook-off" next month he will win three months' training at a Michelin three-star restaurant of his choice on the Continent, plus all sorts of other goodies.

Allan works for Sutcliffe Catering, who in turn do the grub for SBC Warburg. So what do the bankers think of young Allan's efforts? "I think the standard's excellent," said one culinary insider yesterday. "Sometimes the menus are a bit indecipherable, because they use so many French words to describe comparatively simple food."

"The general standard of international cooking has definitely improved since the old days of SG Warburg, with its old English food," the banker adds, controversially.

Does Andrew Regan of Lancia Trust wear eye liner? I only ask because an esteemed female colleague of mine is convinced he does, having seen numerous pictures of the young entrepreneur in recent days. A spokeswoman for the Regan camp firmly denies that Mr Regan wears any such eye adornment. "It would worry me if he did," she says. "He must have dark eyelashes where you would normally wear eye liner." Hmm. Perhaps we should get some private detectives on to this...

Ken Bates' Chelsea Village has bought the title and back catalogue of *Football Monthly* for an "undisclosed but modest sum". It's all part of Chelsea's ambitious plans for a media empire, explains Alan Shaw, Chelsea Village's company secretary.

"It will join our TV station, radio station and Internet coverage," says Mr Shaw. The magazine has been going since the Sixties at least, he says, and they've hired its current editor Paul Hawksbee from IPC Magazines where he was editor-in-chief of their five footy titles. Mr Shaw is at pains to point out that Chelsea Village is a quite separate business from the club. The new stand at Stamford Bridge will be open in time for the new season, and there will also be a new shop, a hotel and 38 flats.

This independence is important, since Mr Shaw says Mr Hawksbee will have free rein to criticise whoever he chooses in print – including Chelsea.

There's another potential conflict of interest. Mr Hawksbee is – horror of horrors – a lifelong Spurs fan. Again Mr Shaw is unfazed. "It'll be interesting to see if he slags off Spurs."

We've had Electoral Rolls from Tesco (Blue and Red etc). Now the Royal Motor Industry Federation has produced research showing that red cars are bought by Labour supporters and blue cars by Tory voters.

"This is definitive proof that people's loyalty to political parties is deeply rooted in their subconscious," says the Federation. For instance, in Tory held Kensington and



Creating a stir: The Roux brothers' scholarship could benefit bankers' lunches

Chelsea there are 9 per cent more blue cars than red, a pattern which is reversed in the safe Labour seat of Barnsley East and Mexborough, which has 6 per cent more red cars.

Turning to the marginal seat of Stevenage, there are only 3 per cent more red cars, the narrowest margin of the three constituencies which the Federation studied. If Labour win it the Federation says this will prove their theory.

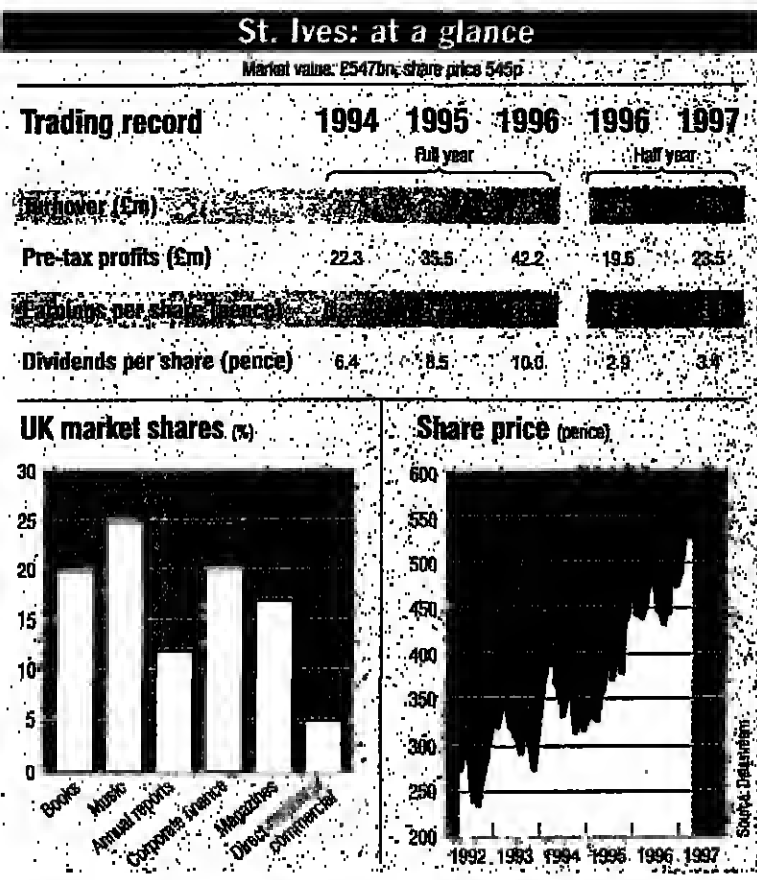
More worrying news for Mr Major is that sales of new cars in Stevenage were 42 per cent down last year on 1989's high. The "feel good" factor obviously isn't overwhelming Stevenage's car salesman.

Unsurprisingly, there are 32 times the number of Porsches in Chelsea as there are in Barnsley. Obviously there aren't that many City bonuses reaching their way north.

Congratulations to Abbey National's new head spokesman Nick Chaloner who arrives from pr agency Hill & Knowlton on 9 May. Mr Chaloner succeeds Jane Ageros, who has been poached by US investment banking giant Merrill Lynch for a rumoured £200,000-plus. Mr Chaloner, 41, will be rousing a more modest sum. He once served in the Queen's Own Hussars and also managed Hill & Knowlton's Athens office for a spell.

While I hate the change of names of British pubs, perhaps Allied Domecq isn't getting it so wrong. A former Halifax Building Society in Birmingham has been redone at £1.2m and becomes The Factotum and Firkin. A converted post office in Bromley is reborn as the Philatelist and Firkin; unused courts in Leeds are now the Felon and Firkin. But what will they call a disused court in Muswell Hill, north London?

John Willcock



# Fuel clean-up plan would cost £35bn, say oil firms

The latest twist in Europe's green politics has left the industry fuming, writes Chris Godsmark

The oil industry yesterday warned of dire consequences for investment and jobs, along with higher petrol prices, if tougher motor fuel standards drawn by green party Euro-MPs in Brussels, were adopted by ministers in two months time.

The latest in a series of furious arguments between the environmental lobby and the big international oil groups could threaten to engulf the next UK government in a complex row in the immediate aftermath of the general election.

The Euro-MPs' standards to clean up harmful chemicals in petrol and diesel fuels would, according to the oil industry, cost some £35bn (£35bn) to implement across the European Union and force British oil refineries to invest an extra £700m a year for the next 15 years.

Worse still, the companies claim, they come at a time when profit margins have been pared to the bone in the face of intense petrol price wars. According to the UK Petroleum Industry Association, the entire oil refining and marketing industry made profits in 1995 of just £10m.

Privately, oil companies blame the debate on a failure of communication between the European Commission and the European Parliament in Strasbourg. Back in 1994 the Parliament and council of ministers issued a directive mandating the Commission to draw up new fuel standards from 2000.

For three years the Commission worked with the oil and motor industries to develop fuel standards which are, they claim, the toughest in the world. They would reduce sulphur in petrol and especially diesel by a third from the year 2000, with tougher rules from 2005 if air quality targets were not met.

Yet a fortnight ago the strategy collapsed dramatically when Euro-MPs tabled an amendment proposing their own, much higher standards. The embarrassment for the oil companies and the Commission was compounded by the fact that the alternative plans were unanimously supported by the European Parliament. Some 80 per cent of Euro-MPs voted

in favour of the Green plan, with just 50 rejecting it.

The vote astonished the oil industry. Steve Theede, chief executive of Conoco's refining and marketing division, believed the earlier plan represented a substantial breakthrough. "Now all that work – which took three years and cost millions – has effectively been thrown away by the European Parliament in return for negligible benefits which seem wholly out of proportion to the cost," he said.

The stiff new emissions proposals are the work of Noel Manere, a French Green Party Euro-MP and mayor of Bejles near Bordeaux. His proposals would cut sulphur emissions to just a tenth of their current levels by 2005. From 2000 to 2005 they would require garages to offer two varieties of diesel fuel, one with the lowest levels of sulphur and another "dirty" diesel with a higher content.

Mike Friend, director gener-

al of the Petroleum Industry Association, said this would mean huge investment in a completely different form of refining process to "crack" or break down the crude oil into different by-products. He estimated this would mean raising investment on environmental measures from £300m a year in the UK to £1bn. Over a 15-year investment cycle the industry would have to find an extra £10bn, money that would inevitably be passed on to drivers in higher pump prices.

"The companies will also be hit because some will probably not be able to find the money for the investment. There could be a further shake-out," he added, on top of the recent merger of BP and Mobil's garage chains and the proposed merger of Gulf and Elf's marketing operations.

Mr Manere insisted that the oil companies' figures were hugely inflated. "The oil industry is a pressure group like any other. They are crying wolf over this." Ironically, both sides are using the same research, commissioned by the EC and drawn up by the industry consultants Arthur D Little, to back up their case.

The next stage in the labyrinthine workings of Euro-

decision making is for ministers from national governments to debate the new proposals on 19 and 20 June. However, the European Parliament's view is no longer of mainly symbolic importance. New rules introduced in the Maastricht Treaty mean the ministers have to take into account the view of the Parliament.

Because the Parliament's vote was so decisive, the Commission will almost certainly have to raise its own emissions proposals. "The answer will have to be some way in the middle," said Mr Friend.

With little time left, frustrated oil executives are regrouping for another lobbying effort but admit to having been outmanoeuvred. The economics of improved air quality may be complex, but inevitably consumers will end up paying the bill.



In the pipeline: The European Parliament's plan would cut sulphur emissions to a tenth of their current levels by 2005. Garages would have to offer two varieties of diesel fuel

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# Barclays chiefs defend £2.8m paid to BZW head

There was also criticism from one shareholder over the recent appearance of Lord Lawson, the former Chancellor of the

Barclays shares rose 6.5p to

Mr Buxton said the bank's branch network remained a key part of strategy for the future, but customers were looking for convenience and choice in how, when and where they could do their banking, through such means as telephone banking and PC banking. The telephone banking service for personal customers, Barclaycall, had 330,000 users and would continue to grow, he added.

**Under attack:** Chairman Andrew Borton (left) and chief executive Martin Taylor had to answer shareholder critics

# NatWest board grilled on losses

Mr Murphy derided the £200,000 cut Mr Owen took in his bonus due to the options trading losses. Lord Alexander rejected Mr Murphy's appointment and instead backed Mr Owen, who won the vote.

## Noble joins biotech fledgling

He and fellow directors of British Biotech, the UK's leading group in the biotechnology sector, courted controversy when in December 1995 they exercised options after the



### New job: Ex-British Biotech director James Noble

shares had soared on the back of very early stage results for the company's Marimastat anti-cancer drug.

group through until first sales of Marimastat, although he added that he had wanted to complete the marketing deal with Tanabe of Japan, finally sealed at the end of last year.

The group announced that losses deepened from £2.7m to £3.99m in the year to December, on turnover raised from £190,000 to £1.44m.

# Ordnance workers fear job cuts in French link

Mr. Forster will be greeted by workers from the factory bearing placards attacking the Government's failure to intervene when he arrives to deliver a speech at the Royal United Services Institute in London.

Jack Dromey, national secretary of the Transport and General Workers Union and spokesman for BAE's five industrial unions, said: "We sup-

The Bridgwater plant is one of three that make up Royal Ordnance's explosives and propellants division. The other two are at Bishopton in Scotland and in Holland.

# Strong sterling scars SmithKline

such as the anti-depressant Seroxat, oew children's vaccines and the Nicorette and Nicoderm smoking-cessation products. "With a continued flow of new products, we are

Excluding DPS, drug sales grew 12 per cent at comparable exchange rates, driven by a good performance from new products introduced in the past five years.

## Jobs boost for the West and Wales

Up to 355 jobs could be created in the West and Wales following announcements yesterday that Matsushita, the Japanese electronics company, was investing a further £13m in Port Talbot and that Direct Line, the motor insurance group, was setting up a telesales operation in Ebbw Vale. Matsushita will build a factory to make hi-fi audio speakers. The project will create 285 posts over the next four years. Meanwhile, in Heston the telephone centre planned by Direct Line will lead to the creation of 70 jobs. A company spokesman said the number of telesales jobs could double, depending on the operation's sales success. Separately, more than 100 jobs are under threat following the appointment yesterday of receivers to Cliffe Construction in Kent. The receivers from KPMG, the chartered accountancy firm, have put the company up for sale.

## Property group buys nursing homes

**Nursing Home Properties** has bought seven nursing homes for £12.6m. The deal takes the amount invested in a total of 62 nursing and residential homes to more than £161m since the company began trading in February 1995. The company also announced the completion of a £100m property securitisation, which it said would allow it to increase its portfolio of properties by a further £50m to around £170m. However, a related restructuring of debt will lead to a change of around 67m against the company's assets. The group's ability to pay dividends this year will be affected for the next 18 months to 31 March could be delayed by a month until early August.

## Spring surprise for Flying Flowers

Shares in Flying Flowers soared 44p to a all-time high of 327.5p after the company said its sales this spring for Gardening Direct, the group's mail order bedding plant business, were £5.5m, significantly up from £1.5m in the same period last year. The company said this would boost full-year pre-tax profits "well in excess" of current market forecasts. Its other businesses are performing in line with expectations.

### Ferraris ahead at half time

Ferraris Group's taxable profits on the half year to February climbed from £488,000 to £626,900. The interim dividend is lifted from 1.05p to 1.2p. Ken Baker, chairman, said high levels of orders and efficiency improvements at the Metalcraft and the Rotary Actuator divisions, together with the benefits of the product rationalisation at PK Morgan and Case, should ensure a successful year.

## Lifejacket hitch for Cosalt

Cosalt's first-half profits increased from £1.1m to £1.65m, and the interim dividend was raised from 3.6p to 4.1p. However, the results of Crewsaver, the inflatable lifejacket manufacturing business purchased last year, were behind budget for the first half, having been hit by a reduction in margins in export markets affected by the strength of sterling.

Company Results				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Casell (†)	44.7m (36.1m)	1.55m (1.11m)	8.72p (6.18p)	4.1p (3.6p)
DPS Foodstuffs (†)	128m (97.7m)	18.7m (15.4m)	11.64p (9.59p)	2.39p (2.1p)
James Dicksie (†)	16.9m (17.2m)	0.93m (0.98m)	4.27p (3.34p)	2.31p (2.2p)
Pleasure (†)	10.2m († 9.0m)	0.53m (0.45m)	3.9p (3.2p)	1.2p (1.05p)
Fishers Ltd (†)	56.7m (24.0m)	1.96m (0.57m)	3.9m (0.83p)	0.5p (0.22p)
Farmerlith (†)	19.4m (22.0m)	1.05m (0.82m)	4.48p (4.77p)	1.82p (1.17p)
Innovative Technologies (†)	1.44m (1.03m)	-3.98m (2.77p)	-43.7p (11.1p) -	-
McCarthy & Stone (†)	90.1m (24.2m)	6m (2.1m)	3.2p (0.83p)	0.05p (0.55p)
MSB Ind (†)	36.9m (36.5m)	5.43m (3.40m)	17.6p (12p)	6p -
St James (†)	183m (134.9m)	23.8m (15.6p)	15.75p (13.57p)	3.4p (2.9p)


† = First    (†) = Interim    (†) = Current Year 9 months    (†) = previous 12 months

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MUN 166+ 32MB	125
MUN 166M 32MB	135
MUN 200+ 32MB ATI 4MB	165
MUN 200M 32MB ATI 4MB	175

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
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Country	Spot	1 month 3 months	Spot	1 month 3 months	Spot	3 months
US	1.0388	84 24-21	1.000	-	0.8944	-
Canada	0.6940	0-10 170-167	0.6940	28-28	0.6159	-
Germany	2.8030	70-40 207-201	1.7112	33-31	1.0000	-
France	0.9506	226-211 875-861	0.7740	110-104	322-312	337-35
Italy	2720.14	24-42 71-64	1701.8	251-245	713-703.5	358-328
Japan	359.25	19-16 788-784	1.54-15	137-135	358-328	-
ECU	1.4573	28-28 72-66	1.1286	11-11	26-33	0.732
Belgium	37.794	18-14 42-35	35.300	7-5	20-17	20.847
Denmark	16.874	250-190 110-85	1.824	80-79	238-247	3.8100
Sweden	1.0388	19-18 42-35	1.0388	80-79	238-247	-
Ireland	1.0385	5-1 15-9	1.0385	34	11-11	0.3758
Norway	1.5367	380-210 770-707	1.0253	30-25	119-119	1.1408
Spain	1.6667	19-18 42-35	1.6667	80-79	238-247	-
Switzerland	2.2894	80-84 274-260	1.8552	49-48	125-120	1.4854
Australia	2.1032	24 14-12	1.204-84	8-8	14-14	0.7859
South Africa	1.6667	19-18 42-35	1.6667	80-79	238-247	-
Hong Kong	0.0867	0-0 0-0	0.2692	27-30	85-85	1.4288
New Zealand	1.2573	25-33 74-85	1.4224	22-24	55-57	0.9417
Thailand	0.0867	0-0 0-0	1.3774	24-24	55-57	0.9417
Singapore	2.2827	0-0 0-0	1.4426	24-24	70-85	0.9435

OTHER SPOT RATES	
10/1/80	10/1/80
10/2/80	10/2/80
10/3/80	10/3/80
10/4/80	10/4/80
10/5/80	10/5/80
10/6/80	10/6/80
10/7/80	10/7/80
10/8/80	10/8/80
10/9/80	10/9/80
10/10/80	10/10/80
10/11/80	10/11/80
10/12/80	10/12/80
10/13/80	10/13/80
10/14/80	10/14/80
10/15/80	10/15/80
10/16/80	10/16/80
10/17/80	10/17/80
10/18/80	10/18/80
10/19/80	10/19/80
10/20/80	10/20/80
10/21/80	10/21/80
10/22/80	10/22/80
10/23/80	10/23/80
10/24/80	10/24/80
10/25/80	10/25/80
10/26/80	10/26/80
10/27/80	10/27/80
10/28/80	10/28/80
10/29/80	10/29/80
10/30/80	10/30/80
10/31/80	10/31/80

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1,8370	0.9868	Nigeria	138.2250	85.0000
Australia	19.7124	12.0433	Oman	0.8303	0.3050
Belgium	1.7400	0.8288	Pakistan	63.8186	40.0759
Brunei	13.5804	1.0249	Philippines	43.2152	26.5600
Ceylon	5.3692	3.3331	Portugal	362.1924	172.845
France	4.6781	5.1772	Qatar	5.5589	3.6415
Ghana	3153.70	1915.00	Rwanda	9405.71	5745.00
India	445.60	272.180	South Africa	7.2823	4.4480
Indonesia	98.6402	35.7180	Taiwan	45.2850	27.0500

### Tourist Rates

C Bayes		C Bayes		C Bayes	
Australia(Dollars)	2.2040	France(Francis)	9.8050	New Zealand(Dollars)	2.2680
Brazil(Reals)	18.8650	Germany(Marks)	2.5950	Norway(Kroner)	10.8970
Belgium(Francs)	35.7000	Greece(Drachmas)	-421.0000	Portugal(Escudos)	270.8000
Canada(Dollars)	3.2820	Hong Kong(Dollars)	12.0000	Saudi(Pistatias)	22.5000
Cyprus(Pounds)	0.8040	India(Rupees)	1.4710	Spain(Pesetas)	18.2800
Dominican(Pesos)	16.3520	Indonesia(Rupiah)	27.0000	Sweden(Kronor)	2.5100
Holland(Guilders)	3.0000	Japan(Yen)	201.7500	Turkey(Liras)	200.9000
Finland(Markas)	0.2400	Korea(Won)	0.8000	United States(Dollars)	1.5890

## Interest Rates

UK		Germany		US		Japan	
Base	6.00%	Discount	2.50%	Prime	6.75%	Discount	0.50%
France		Lombard	4.50%	Discount	5.00%	Belgium	
Intervention	3.15%	Casale		Fed Funds	3.25%	Discount	2.50%
Italy		Prime	4.75%	Spiale		Switzerland	3.00%
Sweden	7.5%	Discount	5.00%	10-Day Repo	5.75%	Switzerland	
Netherlands		Denmark		Sweden		Discount	1.00%
Australia	2.70%	Discount	3.25%	Bono (1y)	4.10%	Lombard	4.125%

## Bond Yields

Country	8 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %	Country	8 yr	Yield %	10 yr	yield %
UK	7.0%	7.27	7.25%	7.57	Netherlands	8.25%	8.77	5.75%	5.75
US	6.65%	6.75	6.25%	8.86	Spain	7.50%	6.13	7.35%	5.93
Japan	5.00%	1.54	2.50%	2.27	Italy	6.25%	7.18	6.75%	7.65
Australia	10.0%	1.32	6.75%	7.77	Belgium	8.0%	9.54	6.25%	5.88
Germany	7.0%	4.78	6.0%	5.85	Sweden	13.0%	5.59	6.55%	7.28
France	7.75%	8.44	5.55%	5.79	ECU Area	8.0%	5.84	5.57%	6.38

Source: 1992 M&F Research

## Money Market Rates

	O'Night		7 Day		1 Month		3 Months		6 Months		1 Year	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Interbank	5		5		5		5		5		5	
Starling CDs												
Local Authority Deps	6		5		5		5		5		5	
Discount Market Deps	6		5		5		5		5		5	
Treasury Bills (Buy)												
Dollar CDs					5.52		5.87		5.52		6.17	
ECU Linked Deps					4		4		4		4	

## Liffe Financial Futures

Contract		Settlement price	High/Low for day	Last/Close traded	Open interest	
Long Dm	(Jun 87)	106-13	106-15	106-13	38909	1707119
German Dm	(Jun 87)	106-13	106-15	106-15	17881	2681187
Italian Dm	(Jun 87)	127-24	127-18	129-73	129-73	1000118
Japan Cdn Bd	(Jun 87)	127-05	127-08	126-36	1254	1448118
Japan Cdn Bd	(Sep 87)	82-12	82-13	82-13	11652	912118
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Jun 87)	86-11	86-10	86-09	18698	194768
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Sep 87)	86-11	86-10	86-09	4177	172118
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Jun 87)	90-25	90-25	90-25	315	0
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Sep 87)	90-25	90-25	90-25	5208	9118
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Jun 87)	88-03	88-02	88-01	3227	0
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Sep 87)	88-03	88-02	88-01	1187	0
3 Mth Eurodollar	(Jun 87)	86-18	86-16	86-15	472	5118
FTSE 100	(Jun 87)	4368-0	4368-0	4368-0	10547	607125

## Liffe FTSE 100 Index Option

Settlement price: 4346	closing offer price				Call/Put
Series	4250	4300	4350	4400	Total vol
May	131/27	94/40	62/59	38/85	.
Jun	171/59	137/76	104/96	80/119	.
Jul	200/78	168/85	134/114	108/137	.
Aug	219/96	187/114	156/134	129/158	110/18

## Commodities

INDUSTRIAL METALS - London Metal Exchange					
\$/tonne	Cash	3 mths	Volume	LME Stocks	chg
Alumina 165	1554.2-55.5	1390.0-36	85576	-	1575
Alumina Alloy	1444.0-45	1470.0-72	9559	-	280
Copper A	2411.5-12.5	2320.0-21	125776	-	2125
Lead	893.50-4.50	859.00	107835	+	450
Nickel	724.0-3	743.0-35	51654	+	1572
Zinc	5775.00	5510.15	9853	-	120
Zinc	1226.0-38	1248.0-50	22224	45450	1550
Different Contract	\$5	\$100	\$5	Stock volumes & change in	

**PRECIOUS METALS**

pen. 1/2 doz	\$	£	Colony	\$	£		\$	£
Platinum	380.25	231.00	Brazzaville	363	222	Krugerson	340352	208210
Platinum	166.50	85.40	Brazzaville 02	187	114	Soss	80/80	49/55
Silver spot	475.00	290.00	Brazzaville 25 oz	92	56	Wobles	381388	223245
Gold Buff	341.50	208.58	Brazzaville 10 oz	41	25	Maple Leaf	347368	212222

Source: Bank & Coin

AGRICULTURAL	
Cocoa	Coffee
1970-71	1970-71
1971-72	1971-72
1972-73	1972-73
1973-74	1973-74
1974-75	1974-75
1975-76	1975-76
1976-77	1976-77
1977-78	1977-78
1978-79	1978-79
1979-80	1979-80
1980-81	1980-81
1981-82	1981-82
1982-83	1982-83
1983-84	1983-84
1984-85	1984-85
1985-86	1985-86
1986-87	1986-87
1987-88	1987-88
1988-89	1988-89
1989-90	1989-90
1990-91	1990-91
1991-92	1991-92
1992-93	1992-93
1993-94	1993-94
1994-95	1994-95
1995-96	1995-96
1996-97	1996-97
1997-98	1997-98
1998-99	1998-99
1999-00	1999-00
2000-01	2000-01
2001-02	2001-02
2002-03	2002-03
2003-04	2003-04
2004-05	2004-05
2005-06	2005-06
2006-07	2006-07
2007-08	2007-08
2008-09	2008-09
2009-10	2009-10
2010-11	2010-11
2011-12	2011-12
2012-13	2012-13
2013-14	2013-14
2014-15	2014-15
2015-16	2015-16
2016-17	2016-17
2017-18	2017-18
2018-19	2018-19
2019-20	2019-20
2020-21	2020-21
2021-22	2021-22
2022-23	2022-23
2023-24	2023-24
2024-25	2024-25
2025-26	2025-26
2026-27	2026-27
2027-28	2027-28
2028-29	2028-29
2029-30	2029-30
2030-31	2030-31
2031-32	2031-32
2032-33	2032-33
2033-34	2033-34
2034-35	2034-35
2035-36	2035-36
2036-37	2036-37
2037-38	2037-38
2038-39	2038-39
2039-40	2039-40
2040-41	2040-41
2041-42	2041-42
2042-43	2042-43
2043-44	2043-44
2044-45	2044-45
2045-46	2045-46
2046-47	2046-47
2047-48	2047-48
2048-49	2048-49
2049-50	2049-50
2050-51	2050-51
2051-52	2051-52
2052-53	2052-53
2053-54	2053-54
2054-55	2054-55
2055-56	2055-56
2056-57	2056-57
2057-58	2057-58
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2061-62	2061-62
2062-63	2062-63
2063-64	2063-64
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2066-67	2066-67
2067-68	2067-68
2068-69	2068-69
2069-70	2069-70
2070-71	2070-71
2071-72	2071-72
2072-73	2072-73
2073-74	2073-74
2074-75	2074-75
2075-76	2075-76
2076-77	2076-77
2077-78	2077-78
2078-79	2078-79
2079-80	2079-80
2080-81	2080-81
2081-82	2081-82
2082-83	2082-83
2083-84	2083-84
2084-85	2084-85
2085-86	2085-86
2086-87	2086-87
2087-88	2087-88
2088-89	2088-89
2089-90	2089-90
2090-91	2090-91
2091-92	2091-92
2092-93</	

LIFFE	Chain	LIFFE	Stone	LIFFE	Stone	LIFFE	Stone	ATA	GR/100kg
May	1006	May	1626	May	98.50	May	26.00	Vol	11.60
Jun	1024	Jun	1655	Jun	99.00	Jun	48.00	Jun	11.40
Jul	1038	Jul	1687	Jul	95.00	Jul	70.00	Jul	15.00
Vol	4367	Vol	3652	Vol	128	Vol	307	Vol	368
White Sugar		Freight		Wheat		Corn		1200 Pounds	
LIFFE	Stone	LIFFE	Stone/kg	LIFFE	Stone	CBOT	Cent/ bushel		
May	810.00	Apr	1291	May	96.50	Hi-Lo		Sett	
Jun	304.70	May	1230	Jun	98.75	May	300-298.50		298.50
Oct	301.90	Vol	1210	Jul	96.50	Jul	300.75-298.00		298.25

Vol	1982	1983	1984	V
<b>Other Softs (Agriculture)</b>				

Mar	Melons (6 to 8")	\$/stone	109.0	May	Soye Oil	FL/100kg	105.0
Mar/Apr	Copra (T)	\$/stone	145.0	Mar/Apr	Coconut Oil (t)	\$/stone	720.0
May	Cotton (NY)	UScent/lb	71.02	unq	Sunflower Oil	\$/stone	unq
unq	Wool	Acording	unq	Mar/Jun	Rapeseed Oil	FL/100kg	105.50
Apr	Rubber*	UScent/kg	284.0	Apr/May	Groundnut Oil	\$/stone	955.0

**ENERGY**

WTI		NYMEX		WTI		WTI		WTI	
	(per barrel)		(per barrel)		(per barrel)		(per barrel)		(per barrel)
<b>\$PE</b>	<b>5.30pm</b>	*chg	% chg	<b>\$PE</b>	<b>close</b>	*chg	% chg	<b>\$m</b>	<b>Spot O/C North West Europe</b>
May	18.18	-0.26		May	183.76	-1.50		Jun	19.76
Jun	18.18	-0.26		Jun	184.76	-1.25		Jul	19.75
Jul	18.28	-0.81		Jul	188.26	-1.50		Aug	19.70
Vol	94729			Vol	97763			Sep	19.85
									Landed Fuel Oil
									BORR

\*Notes: 5.30pm previous day's Year ago prices shown average for week. Source: ENR, London Oil & Refined Report, Japan press.

COMMODITY INDICES			
*CSCI Index	Base date	+Spot	%

Index	1977=100	194.38	+0.87	215.29	-9.42	208.15	-8.78
Agricultural	1970=100	288.30	+0.08	231.29	+16.03	312.51	-14.15
Energy	1983=100	67.05	+1.14	85.86	-21.20	71.49	-5.36
Industrial Materials	1977=100	176.48	+0.05	168.75	+4.54	187.08	-5.92
Livestock	1970=100	186.23	+0.29	191.08	+2.72	195.18	+5.87
Processed Materials	1975=100	438.10	+0.48	463.54	-5.49	488.62	-11.11

Source: Goldman, Sachs & Co. "GSCI is a trademark and service mark of Goldman, Sachs & Co. 10"

# 100 Largest Insurance Funds

Rank	Fund Name	Assets \$Bil.	Assets \$Mil.	Other Assets \$Mil.	Assets \$Bil.	Assets \$Mil.
1	Accord Equity Fund I	288.0	304	Windsor	107.6	107.6
2	Accord Equity Fund II	218	218	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	99.0	99.0
3	Accord Managed Fund I	188.0	861.2	London Equity	97.0	97.0
4	Accord Managed Fund II	168.7	164.2	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
5	Accord Managed Fund III	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
6	Accord Managed Fund IV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
7	Accord Managed Fund V	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
8	Accord Managed Fund VI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
9	Accord Managed Fund VII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
10	Accord Managed Fund VIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
11	Accord Managed Fund IX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
12	Accord Managed Fund X	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
13	Accord Managed Fund XI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
14	Accord Managed Fund XII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
15	Accord Managed Fund XIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
16	Accord Managed Fund XIV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
17	Accord Managed Fund XV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
18	Accord Managed Fund XVI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
19	Accord Managed Fund XVII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
20	Accord Managed Fund XVIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
21	Accord Managed Fund XIX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
22	Accord Managed Fund XX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
23	Accord Managed Fund XXI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
24	Accord Managed Fund XXII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
25	Accord Managed Fund XXIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
26	Accord Managed Fund XXIV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
27	Accord Managed Fund XXV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
28	Accord Managed Fund XXVI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
29	Accord Managed Fund XXVII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
30	Accord Managed Fund XXVIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
31	Accord Managed Fund XXIX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
32	Accord Managed Fund XXX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
33	Accord Managed Fund XXXI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
34	Accord Managed Fund XXXII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
35	Accord Managed Fund XXXIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
36	Accord Managed Fund XXXIV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
37	Accord Managed Fund XXXV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
38	Accord Managed Fund XXXVI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
39	Accord Managed Fund XXXVII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
40	Accord Managed Fund XXXVIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
41	Accord Managed Fund XXXIX	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
42	Accord Managed Fund XL	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
43	Accord Managed Fund XLI	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
44	Accord Managed Fund XLII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
45	Accord Managed Fund XLIII	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
46	Accord Managed Fund XLIV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0
47	Accord Managed Fund XLV	168.7	168.7	Windsor & Dabney Management Account	97.0	97.0

## UNIT TRUST GUIDE

ex dividend  
exit charge applies  
when units are sold  
formerly 'offer'  
formerly 'bid'  
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## sport

## Instant fame for Cracknell and Foster

Mike Rowbottom witnesses the public unveiling of the new foursome formed by Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent to take them into the next Olympics

Four men in a boat provoked a frenzied flickering of camera shutters here yesterday as they took to the water for the first time.

Two of the occupants, Steven Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent, were used to the media glare having put together a four-year unbeaten run in the coxed pairs event which earned them three world and two Olympic titles, culminating in Atlanta last summer.

For the two men sitting between them, however, Tim Foster and James Cracknell, this was an introduction to a new way of life as component parts of a high-profile coxed four which will be expected to bring further world and Olympic glory to Britain in the coming years.

"I didn't really know what to expect today," said Cracknell, a 24-year-old from Sutton who is qualified as a geography teacher. "I was pretty surprised at how many people came. I think I have got myself into."

Cracknell, it transpired yesterday, was the real reason Britain's leading rowers made a hasty exit from the Olympic village before competition got underway last summer. When he was discovered to be suffering from a debilitating virus, those with whom he was sharing accommodation - including Redgrave and Pinsent - were shipped out at short notice, a move which

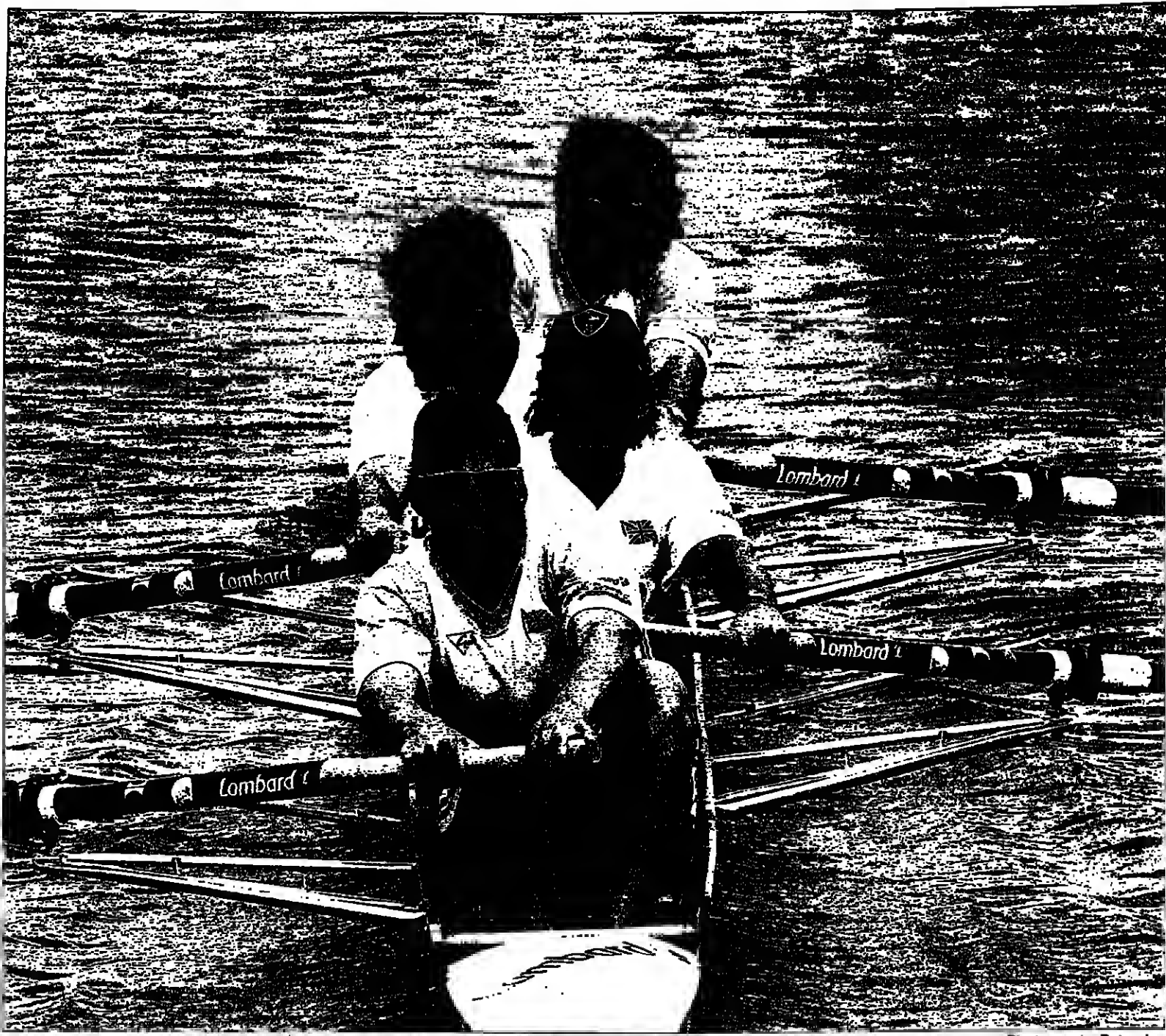
was said at the time to have been prompted by the chaotic Olympic transport arrangements. "I knew I wasn't fit to compete," Cracknell said. "Walking to have lunch in the village put my pulse rate over 130. By the time I got back, all the other guys in my apartment had gone. It was like the Marie Celeste."

Now he is back in the fold - although things might have been different had he not escaped injury when writing off his beloved ZR 1000 motorbike in Putney two months ago.

"It's not a dream come true for me yet, but hopefully it will be later on. Steve and Matthew always get it right on the big occasion and that is where we can learn."

Although both have earnings, Foster and Cracknell present very different appearances. Cracknell is more reserved, Foster - with a Kurt Cobain hairstyle, multi-coloured laced Doc Martens and tartan trousers - is a more obviously flamboyant character.

Last month he stroked the Oxford crew which narrowly lost the Boat Race. He has completed a one-year special diploma in social studies, Cracknell,



Matthew Pinsent (front) and Steve Redgrave (rear) bracket their new partners, James Cracknell and Tim Foster yesterday

Photograph: Peter Jay

sitting beside him, smiles at this point, and suggests that socialising rather than social studies was the core component.

Foster acknowledged that there were some potential difficulties in working with household names. "It's always going to be Steve and Matthew in a four," he said. "That's part of the deal. It's something that could become a contentious issue if you let it. But if you get on top of it and understand it, we all know we have an equal part to play."

After trials in the winter, this final group of four should have got into racing mode within the last fortnight at a training camp in Belgium - but Redgrave could not go because he required an emergency appendix operation two weeks ago. Thus it was that yesterday's outing on the Thames for the benefit of the trailing press launch and photographers gathered like expectant ducks on the bank was the first for Britain's fab foursome.

The four-times Olympic

champion did admit that he had found it hard to return to training after taking a four-month post-Olympic break. "Half-way through my first endurance circuit, I thought to myself, 'What the hell am I doing here?'" But overall, I think the break has given me new vigour.

It may come as a surprise to those who have followed Redgrave's prodigious career that he did not perform the operation himself with the aid of a mirror, knife and medical textbook.

"The consultant said I was out supposed to do anything for three weeks," he said.

Advice which, by and large, he has followed - if you discount the cycling he did earlier this week, and the weight training session he had undertaken early yesterday morning. And of course, going out in a boat. And of course, the previous day's golf game against Pinsent.

"I gave him a thrashing yesterday," Pinsent announced, his cherubic face breaking into an

other broad grin. The thought occurred that he was speaking of a man who had undergone surgery only a fortnight earlier. Then again, this is no ordinary man.

The joshing, the camaraderie is building already. It is underpinned by the knowledge that each of these men would spit blood for the common cause. Even though Redgrave is unlikely to be fully fit, their first race - at the World Cup event in Munich on 31 May to 1 June - will be something to see.

## Ring pays ultimate price for failure

Rugby Union  
PAUL STEPHENS

West Hartlepool have parted company with their player-coach, Mark Ring, following last Saturday's heavy home defeat by Northampton, which consigned the North-east club to relegation. In the West Country yesterday, the news was happier as Gloucester announced their first important signing in the professional era: Philippe Saint-André, the former France captain and Montpellier wing.

After the decision to release Ring from his contract, which still has a year to run, the chairman, Andy Hindle, said: "I'm sorry the experiment with Mark Ring failed. He's an honourable man who worked hard and brought on a lot of our talented youngsters, but ultimately, a coach is judged by his results."

"However, we're determined to be up there with the best, and within the next few days, I hope to announce the signing of a world-class coach, who will take West back to the First Division."

Promoted along with Sale at the end of the 1993-94 campaign, West have endured three seasons which have brought them a paltry nine victories in 56 League One matches. Since promotion, West have dismissed three coaches. The Australian Barry Taylor was sacked just five months after his appointment, ending a controversial reign which saw the departure of the No 8 Dave Watson and the bookie Simon Mitchell to Harlequins. When the Yorkshireman Barry Forster failed to improve West's lot, the Welshman Ring was handed control in January 1996.

A series of injuries has prevented Ring, an outside-half or centre, from playing a full part on the field. Off it, his decision to recruit seven Welsh players, including West's captain, Kevin Moseley, and to dispense with the services of locally born players like Alan Brown has not been a success. Ring has now paid the inevitable price of failure.

## Davis sh his old

being  
see page 2

PUNCESTOWN  
2.40



## INDEPENDENT FANTASY FOOTBALL

LATEST RESULTS AND TOP 50 TEAMS

## TOP FIFTY LEAGUE TABLE

CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 17 AUGUST - 13 APRIL

POS	NAME	TEAM	POINTS
1	MR PETER FRANKENTHAL	JOSI MARTI	914
2	MR PAUL MATTHEW	THE DOOR MAT	888
3	MR SEAN BROSNAN	OASIS	887
4	MR ASHLEY BRETTE	RELEGATION 12	881
5	MR SCOTT MCINERNEY		877
6	MR SIMON LIU	DEFENCE ROVERS	877
7	MR WILLIAM BARR	KRUGER FC	877
8	MR KEITH HARRY	ORGANIC MANURE FC	874
9	MR RICK YAP	OUT OF MIND	871
10	MR LAN GROUT	SILK CITY	870
11	MR ALEXANDRA FEAST	THE ZOROSTRIAN ZENITH ZYGREB	869
12	MR G WHITE	WHITE CITY	867
13	MR BEN KENDALL	TURKEY'S TRUGGERS	865
14	MR PETER FRANKENTHAL	SANDING	863
15	MR D R MILLS	THE MUSHROOM LAYERS	862
16	MR PAUL HOOKER	NOBBIES BOYS	860
17	MR JOHN COX	SOUTHRILL FC	859
18	MR ANDREW BOLTON	ANDREWS B TEAM	859
19	MR ADAM HOGG	BLAGGY HOGG	858
20	MR O J JOHNSON	THE AWAY WINNERS	857
21	NEIL ENTWISTLE	JERRY BANK ATHLETIC	857
22	MR TONY AKINDALE	OLLIE VILLA	856
23	MR GARFIELD MACALEH	GARFIELD BOYS 2ND	856
24	MR GRAHAM LONGSDANE	SANDLING STROLLERS	856
25	MR JONATHAN DAVIS	GOLDEN TEAM	856
26	MR J LILLY	JEWELS REMY'S GONE MISSING	855
27	MR ADAM DEACON	ADAM ACES	855
28	MR MARK HAYDEN	TROWBRIDGE WANDERERS	854
29	MR S J PERRY	THE GREAT ESCAPERS	852
30	MR SIMON DRAPER	PLATE FC	85
31	MR S J GODWIN	NORWOOD	851
32	MR J ALDOUS	MEN BEHAVING WELL	850
33	MR PAUL HARRIS	CELL CITY	850
34	MR BEN ANDREWS	BOOZEY'S BAYTLERS	849
35	MR A MORGAN	KICK START	849
36	MR L KETTLERWELL		849
37	MR TERRY JONES	ANDROGEN UNITED	848
38	MR IVAN HOOD	EAST GATE ROVERS	848
39	MR PETER FRANKENTHAL	ARLENSU	848
40	MR P CURRAN		848
41	MR ANDREW GODDEN	RC ALZEY	848
42	MR A SWANNY	DOG'S BRICK	847
43	MR F J GREAVES	ANONYMOUS ROVERS	847
44	MR P HEDDINGWAY	WAGON WHEELS	847
45	MR ANDY LANE	IF ANYONE CAN TOUCAN	847
46	MR MARTIN KENNICK	WILD ROVERS	846
47	MR RICHARD SMITH	DYNAMO CHICKEN KEY	846
48	MR DAVID MAHER	THE ELITE OF THE ELITE	846
49	MR GARY HAYLES	101 ALLSTARS	845

## THE INDEPENDENT INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY



Today we publish the latest results in our Independent Fantasy Football game, supported by Philips Energy Saver Light Bulbs.

The Team Market and Scores table published below, shows four scores. The Week 36 (WK 36) column lists all points scored in Premiership matches played between Monday 14 April - Sunday 20 April inclusive. Column B lists all points scored before the transfer period. Column A lists all points scored after the transfer period. The Overall (Ov) column lists the total amount of points scored in all matches played from Saturday 17 August - Sunday 20 April.

Also published today is the Top 50 League table (see left). It lists the overall top scoring Independent Fantasy Football managers and their teams for matches played between Saturday 17 August - Sunday 13 April.

Results will be published every Wednesday in The Independent for all games played from the previous Monday to Sunday inclusive. They will also appear the following Sunday, in the Independent

SCORING SYSTEM

4 points for a goal ■ 4 points for a goalkeeper/defender clean sheet ■ 3 points for a successful assist ■ 1 point when a player is selected and plays ■ 1 point for a winning goal ■ 3 points for a manager win, 1 point for a draw ■ Lose 1 point for a yellow card ■ Lose 3 points for a red card

oo Sunday. The overall Top 50 League table will be printed every Wednesday and again on Sunday. Terms and conditions as previously published

PRIZES

The overall winner at the end of the season will be the entrant who has accrued more points than any other Independent Fantasy Football team in that time. Win the ultimate prize - a trip to the 1998 World Cup in France. The winner, plus companion, will see all the action of a quarter-final and a semi-final of their choice, plus the final. In addition, the highest scoring team each month will win a pair of tickets to one of England's World Cup qualifying games at Wembley.

## TEAM MARKET AND SCORES

OVERALL SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 17 AUGUST - 20 APRIL; WEEK 35 SCORE CALCULATED ON MATCHES PLAYED FROM 14 APRIL - 20 APRIL									
CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	POINTS	VALUE	CODE	PLAYER	TEAM	POINTS	VALUE
Wk36	B	A	Ov	(£m)	Wk36	B	A	Ov	(£m)
GOALKEEPERS									
300	Seaman	ARS	1	38	21	59	5.9		
301	Bosnich	AV	0	19	47	40	4.0		
302	Worner	SLA	1	19	47	40	4.0		
303	Kharin	CHE	0	21	0	21	3.7		
304	Worner	COV	0	15	48	70	2.5		
305	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
306	Flan	COV	0	1	1	1	0.1		
307	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
308	Marys	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
309	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
310	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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313	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
314	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
315	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
316	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
317	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
318	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
319	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
320	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
321	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
322	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
323	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
324	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
325	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
326	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
327	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
328	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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339	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
340	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
341	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
342	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
343	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
344	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
345	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
346	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
347	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
348	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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436	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
437	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
438	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
439	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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455	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
456	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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461	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
462	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
463	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
464	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
465	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
466	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
467	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
468	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
469	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
470	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
471	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
472	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
473	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
474	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
475	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
476	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
477	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
478	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
479	Seethall	LEI	0	1	1	1	0.1		
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# Davis shows all his old spring

## Racing

GREG WOOD reports from PuncHESTOWN

The tipsters who add the comments to the PuncHESTOWN racecard are not ones to commit themselves too firmly. "Running well enough" began the judgement on one of yesterday's runners, "however is not the force of old. Place possibilities." In the same race, another runner was "a disappointing individual, who cannot be ruled out", and so it went on. With all eventualities safely covered, they probably retired to the bar to enjoy a stress-free afternoon, and when it is Festival time at PuncHESTOWN, few would blame them.

In its history and prestige, this meeting will never rival the original Festival at Cheltenham, but it still has several significant advantages. This is Cheltenham without the crush, the mess and the headlong dash towards disaster. It is an easy-going celebration of National Hunt racing, yet one at which the delight in a winning favourite or an ac-

complished jumper is undiminished, and when a horse is both at once, as Kairon Davis was in the big race yesterday, there is no finer place to be.

Kairon Davis is no longer the champion two-mile chaser, having finished only fourth in Martha's Son at Cheltenham, but the arrival of spring always revives his spirits and this year

**RICHARD EDMONDSON**  
NAP: Pike Creek  
(Epsom 3.40)  
NE: Silver Groom  
(Epsom 2.35)

is no exception. Arthur Moore's runner was soon ahead and flying his fences, and for all that he was giving 10lb and more to six talented opponents, defeat was soon not in the question.

"It'll take a good one to lower his colours at Cheltenham next year," Moore said afterwards, already plotting a path towards the Queen Mother Champion Chase. "There's nothing here at Christmas, so we'll probably start off in the Tingle Creek, and then build up

to Cheltenham." Forget minor diversions such as the Guinness, Derby and Arc, the next main event in the racing calendar is now just 11 months away.

The 1998 Cheltenham Festival was also on the mind of Stan Clarke, who won the Grand National with Lord Cyllene two weeks ago, and now has an excellent hurdler in look forward to as well. Midnight Legend made his name as a handicapper with a liking for Goodwood, but at the age of six - and still, importantly for his future, with his reproductive system intact - he has found a calling as one of the year's best novice hurdlers.

David Nicholson, Midnight Legend's trainer, said after his comfortable success in the Country Pride Handicap Novices' Hurdle, that he had given four different sets of instructions to Richard Johnson, the colt's jockey. "I told him jump off and bring, jump off and drop in, jump off upstides or do his own thing," Nicholson said, prompting the thought that if he ever gives up training, he could always write the comments in the PuncHESTOWN racecard.



Tearaway King (left) clears a bank on the way to victory at PuncHESTOWN yesterday. Photograph: Julian Herbert/Allsport

Clarke expects Midnight Legend to pursue one more campaign over hurdles, with the Champion Hurdle the obvious aim, before retiring to become that valuable stud rider, a jumping stallion with top-class form over obstacles.

British punters do not need to cross the sea to enjoy the

PuncHESTOWN experience today, since the two most valuable races on the card have been spiced into Channel 4's coverage from Epsom. The Stanley Conker Champin Novices' Hurdle will probably be little more than a lap of honour for Istabraq, who made a great many Irish people very happy

when winning the Royal Sun Alliance Hurdle at Cheltenham, though anyone looking to buy money at odds-on should ponder on what that supreme effort may have taken out of him.

The Heineken Gold Cup is far more competitive, with three British runners, Noyan, Carole's Crusader and General Pongo,

among the 18-strong field. The favourite, though, is likely to be Amble Speedy, who appeared to win the Irish Grand National by the thick end of two lengths last time out, only for the photo-finish camera to prove Mudahim the victor. As the racecard might put it, he has prospects.

PUNCHESTOWN	
<b>2.40</b> STANLEY COOKER CHAMPION NOVICE HURDLE £25,000 added 2m 4f Penalty Value £18,600	
1. 21224 2. 11212 3. 10212 4. 11212 5. 11212 6. 11212 7. 11212 8. 11212 9. 11212 10. 11212	
<b>3.15</b> HEINEKEN GOLD CUP (HANDICAP CHASE) £25,000 3m 2f Penalty Value £37,200	
1. 11212 2. 11212 3. 11212 4. 11212 5. 11212 6. 11212 7. 11212 8. 11212 9. 11212 10. 11212	

Epsom	
<b>2.05</b> SPENDER, who beat Apollo Red by 1/2 length over 6f at Brighton last time, remains on a tentative handicap mark and could follow up on the 11th of May at PuncHESTOWN.	
<b>2.35</b> CHAMPAGNE PRINCE, who probably had too much use made of him early on when 7 lengths fourth to Gyncecrat Premier over 1m 2f at Beverley last time, is fairly well equipped on his best form and could go close if ridden more patiently. Sharp Shuttle may pose most problems.	
<b>3.10</b> PALLO SKY, who impressed when beating Running Stag by 1/2 lengths over 1m 2f at Kempton last time, should stay 3/4 lengths third to Feltan in the Listed Eastern Stakes over a mile at the same track.	
<b>3.40</b> BAZARD A GUESS, 2 lengths third to Angus-G in a decent 1m 4f handicap at the Newcastle Craven meeting, remains on a fair handicap mark and should run another big race. White Plains and Northern Sun are among the dangers.	

CATERICK	
<b>2.00</b> Keen To Please, 2.30 Hopefully 3.00 Summerfield Special 3.30 Van Luts 4.00 Brutal Fantasy 4.30 Flashing Way 5.00 Only Josh	
<b>2.00</b> ROYAL ARTILLERY APPRENTICE LIMITED STAKES (CLASS C) £2,875 added 6f	
1. 11212 2. 11212 3. 11212 4. 11212 5. 11212 6. 11212 7. 11212 8. 11212 9. 11212 10. 11212	

# RESULTS

## 30th Maiden Stakes (Class C) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) M. Jernegan 9-3	Mills 1-1
2. <b>PRINCE (Bk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 31st Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 32nd Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 33rd Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 34th Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 35th Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 36th Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## 37th Maiden Stakes (Class D) \$10,000, 3YO 3m 4f

1. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
2. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
3. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
4. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
5. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
6. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
7. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
8. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
9. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1
10. <b>CRISTALINA (Dk)</b> (20) B. Jernegan 9-3	M. Roberts 2-1

## PONTFRACK

2.10: 1. <b>MANOLD (P. Bradley)</b> 9-4; 2. <b>Able Shafter</b> 4-1; 3. <b>Henry The Hawk</b> 20-1; 4. <b>P. M. 24-1</b> ; 5. <b>Barry Concorde</b> 7-2; 6. <b>22-1</b> ; 7. <b>22-1</b> ; 8. <b>22-1</b> ; 9. <b>22-1</b> ; 10. <b>22-1</b> ; 11. <b>22-1</b> ; 12. <b>22-1</b> ; 13. <b>22-1</b> ; 14. <b>22-1</b> ; 15. <b>22-1</b> ; 16. <b>22-1</b> ; 17. <b>22-1</b> ; 18. <b>22-1</b> ; 19. <b>22-1</b> ; 20. <b>22-1</b> ; 21. <b>22-1</b> ; 22. <b>22-1</b> ; 23. <b>22-1</b> ; 24. <b>22-1</b> ; 25. <b>22-1</b> ; 26. <b>22-1</b> ; 27. <b>22-1</b> ; 28. <b>22-1</b> ; 29. <b>22-1</b> ; 30. <b>22-1</b> ; 31. <b>22-1</b> ; 32. <b>22-1</b> ; 33. <b>22-1</b> ; 34. <b>22-1</b> ; 35. <b>22-1</b> ; 36. <b>22-1</b> ; 37. <b>22-1</b> ; 38. <b>22-1</b> ; 39. <b>22-1</b> ; 40. <b>22-1</b> ; 41. <b>22-1</b> ; 42. <b>22-1</b> ; 43. <b>22-1</b> ; 44. <b>22-1</b> ; 45. <b>22-1</b> ; 46. <b>22-1</b> ; 47. <b>22-1</b> ; 48. <b>22-1</b> ; 49. <b>22-1</b> ; 50. <b>22-1</b> ; 51. <b>22-1</b> ; 52. <b>22-1</b> ; 53. <b>22-1</b> ; 54. <b>22-1</b> ; 55. <b>22-1</b> ; 56. <b>22-1</b> ; 57. <b>22-1</b> ; 58. <b>22-1</b> ; 59. <b>22-1</b> ; 60. <b>22-1</b> ; 61. <b>22-1</b> ; 62. <b>22-1</b> ; 63. <b>22-1</b> ; 64. <b>22-1</b> ; 65. <b>22-1</b> ; 66. <b>22-1</b> ; 67. <b>22-1</b> ; 68. <b>22-1</b> ; 69. <b>22-1</b> ; 70. <b>22-1</b> ; 71. <b>22-1</b> ; 72. <b>22-1</b> ; 73. <b>22-1</b> ; 74. <b>22-1</b> ; 75. <b>22-1</b> ; 76. <b>22-1</b> ; 77. <b>22-1</b> ; 78. <b>22-1</b> ; 79. <b>22-1</b> ; 80. <b>22-1</b> ; 81. <b>22-1</b> ; 82. <b>22-1</b> ; 83. <b>22-1</b> ; 84. <b>22-1</b> ; 85. <b>22-1</b> ; 86. <b>22-1</b> ; 87. <b>22-1</b> ; 88. <b>22-1</b> ; 89. <b>22-1</b> ; 90. <b>22-1</b> ; 91. <b>22-1</b> ; 92. <b>22-1</b> ; 93. <b>22-1</b> ; 94. <b>22-1</b> ; 95. <b>22-1</b> ; 96. <b>22-1</b> ; 97. <b>22-1</b> ; 98. <b>22-1</b> ; 99. <b>22-1</b> ; 100. <b>22-1</b> ; 101. <b>22-1</b> ; 102. <b>22-1</b> ; 103. <b>22-1</b> ; 104. <b>22-1</b> ; 105. <b>22-1</b> ; 106. <b>22-1</b> ; 107. <b>22-1</b> ; 108. <b>22-1</b> ; 109. <b>22-1</b> ; 110. <b>22-1</b> ; 111. <b>22-1</b> ; 112. <b>22-1</b> ; 113. <b>22-1</b> ; 114. <b>22-1</b> ; 115. <b>22-1</b> ; 116. <b>22-1</b> ; 117. <b>22-1</b> ; 118. <b>22-1</b> ; 119. <b>22-1</b> ; 120. <b>22-1</b> ; 121. <b>22-1</b> ; 122. <b>22-1</b> ; 123. <b>22-1</b> ; 124. <b>22-1</b> ; 125. <b>22-1</b> ; 126. <b>22-1</b> ; 127. <b>22-1</b> ; 128. <b>22-1</b> ; 129. <b>22-1</b> ; 130. <b>22-1</b> ; 131. <b>22-1</b> ; 132. <b>22-1</b> ; 133. <b>22-1</b> ; 134. <b>22-1</b> ; 135. <b>22-1</b> ; 136. <b>22-1</b> ; 137. <b>22-1</b> ; 138. <b>22-1</b> ; 139. <b>22-1</b> ; 140. <b>22-1</b> ; 141. <b>22-1</b> ; 142. <b>22-1</b> ; 143. <b>22-1</b> ; 144. <b>22-1</b> ; 145. <b>22-1</b> ; 146. <b>22-1</b> ; 147. <b>22-1</b> ; 148. <b>22-1</b> ; 149. <b>22-1</b> ; 150. <b>22-1</b> ; 151. <b>22-1</b> ; 152. <b>22-1</b> ; 153. <b>22-1</b> ; 154. <b>22-1</b> ; 155. <b>22-1</b> ; 156. <b>22-1</b> ; 157. <b>22-1</b> ; 158. <b>22-1</b> ; 159. <b>22-1</b> ; 160. <b>22-1</b> ; 161. <b>22-1</b> ; 162. <b>22-1</b> ; 163. <b>22-1</b> ; 164. <b>22-1</b> ; 165. <b>22-1</b> ; 166. <b>22-1</b> ; 167. <b>22-1</b> ; 168. <b>22-1</b> ; 169. <b>22-1</b> ; 170. <b>22-1</b> ; 171. <b>22-1</b> ; 172. <b>22-1</b> ; 173. <b>22-1</b> ; 174. <b>22-1</b> ; 175. <b>22-1</b> ; 176. <b>22-1</b> ; 177. <b>22-1</b> ; 178. <b>22-1</b> ; 179. <b>22-1</b> ; 180. <b>22-1</b> ; 181. <b>22-1</b> ; 182. <b>22-1</b> ; 183. <b>22-1</b> ; 184. <b>22-1</b> ; 185. <b>22-1</b> ; 186. <b>22-1</b> ; 187. <b>22-1</b> ; 188. <b>22-1</b> ; 189. <b>22-1</b> ; 190. <b>22-1</b> ; 191. <b>22-1</b> ; 192. <b>22-1</b> ; 193. <b>22-1</b> ; 194. <b>22-1</b> ; 195. <b>22-1</b> ; 196. <b>22-1</b> ; 197. <b>22-1</b> ; 198. <b>22-1</b> ; 199. <b>22-1</b> ; 200. <b>22-1</b> ; 201. <b>22-1</b> ; 202. <b>22-1</b> ; 203. <b>22-1</b> ; 204. <b>22-1</b> ; 205. <b>22-1</b> ; 206. <b>22-1</b> ; 207. <b>22-1</b> ; 208. <b>22-1</b> ; 209. <b>22-1</b> ; 210. <b>22-1</b> ; 211. <b>22-1</b> ; 212. <b>22-1</b> ; 213. <b>22-1</b> ; 214. <b>22-1</b> ; 215. <b>22-1</b> ; 216. <b>22-1</b> ; 217. <b>22-1</b> ; 218. <b>22-1</b> ; 219. <b>22-1</b> ; 220. <b>22-1</b> ; 221. <b>22-1</b> ; 222. <b>22-1</b> ; 223. <b>22-1</b> ; 224. <b>22-1</b> ; 225. <b>22-1</b> ; 226. <b>22-1</b> ; 227. <b>22-1</b> ; 228. <b>22-1</b> ; 229. <b>22-1</b> ; 230. <b>22-1</b> ; 231. <b>22-1</b> ; 232. <b>22-1</b> ; 233. <b>22-1</b> ; 234. <b>22-1</b> ; 235. <b>22-1</b> ; 236. <b>22-1</b> ; 237. <b>22-1</b> ; 238. <b>22-1</b> ; 239. <b>22-1</b> ; 240. <b>22-1</b> ; 241. <b>22-1</b> ; 242. <b>22-1</b> ; 243. <b>22-1</b> ; 244. <b>22-1</b> ; 245. <b>22-1</b> ; 246. <b>22-1</b> ; 247. <b>22-1</b> ; 248. <b>22-1</b> ; 249. <b>22-1</b> ; 250. <b>22-1</b> ; 251. <b>22-1</b> ; 252. <b>22-1</b> ; 253. <b>22-1</b> ; 254. <b>22-1</b> ; 255. <b>22-1</b> ; 256. <b>22-1</b> ; 257. <b>22-1</b> ; 258. <b>22-1</b> ; 259. <b>22-1</b> ; 260. <b>22-1</b> ; 261. <b>22-1</b> ; 262. <b>22-1</b> ; 263. <b>22-1</b> ; 264. <b>22-1</b> ; 265. <b>22-1</b> ; 266. <b>22-1</b> ; 267. <b>22-1</b> ; 268. <b>22-1</b> ; 269. <b>22-1</b> ; 270. <b>22-1</b> ; 271. <b>22-1</b> ; 272. <b>22-1</b> ; 273. <b>22-1</b> ; 274. <b>22-1</b> ; 275. <b>22-1</b> ; 276. <b>22-1</b> ; 277. <b>22-1</b> ; 278. <b>22-1</b> ; 279. <b>22-1</b> ; 280. <b>22-1</b> ; 281. <b>22-1</b> ; 282. <b>22-1</b> ; 283. <b>22-1</b> ; 284. <b>22-1</b> ; 285. <b>22-1</b> ; 286. <b>22-1</b> ; 287. <b>22-1</b> ; 288. <b>22-1</b> ; 289. <b>22-1</b> ; 290. <b>22-1</b> ; 291. <b>22-1</b> ; 292. <b>22-1</b> ; 293. <b>22-1</b> ; 294. <b>22-1</b> ; 295. <b>22-1</b> ; 296. <b>22-1</b> ; 297. <b>22-1</b> ; 298. <b>22-1</b> ; 299. <b>22-1</b> ; 300. <b>22-1</b> ; 301. <b>22-1</b> ; 302. <b>22-1</b> ; 303. <b>22-1</b> ; 304. <b>22-1</b> ; 305. <b>22-1</b> ; 306. <b>22-1</b> ; 307. <b>22-1</b> ; 308. <b>22-1</b> ; 309. <b>22-1</b> ; 310. <b>22-1</b> ; 311. <b>22-1</b> ; 312. <b>22-1</b> ; 313. <b>22-1</b> ; 314. <b>22-1</b> ; 315. <b>22-1</b> ; 316. <b>22-1</b> ; 317. <b>22-1</b> ; 318. <b>22-1</b> ; 319. <b>22-1</b> ; 320. <b>22-1</b> ; 321. <b>22-1</b> ; 322. <b>22-1</b> ; 323. <b>22-1</b> ; 324. <b>22-1</b> ; 325. <b>22-1</b> ; 326. <b>22-1</b> ; 327. <b>22-1</b> ; 328. <b>22-1</b> ; 329. <b>22-1</b> ; 330. <b>22-1</b> ; 331. <b>22-1</b> ; 332. <b>22-1</b> ; 333. <b>22-1</b> ; 334. <b>22-1</b> ; 335. <b>22-1</b> ; 336. <b>22-1</b> ; 337. <b>22-1</b> ; 338. <b>22-1</b> ; 339. <b>22-1</b> ; 340. <b>22-1</b> ; 341. <b>22-1</b> ; 342. <b>22-1</b> ; 343. <b>22-1</b> ; 344. <b>22-1</b> ; 345. <b>22-1</b> ; 346. <b>22-1</b> ; 347. <b>22-1</b> ; 348. <b>22-1</b> ; 349. <b>22-1</b> ; 350. <b>22-1</b> ; 351. <b>22-1</b> ; 352. <b>22-1</b> ; 353. <b>22-1</b> ; 354. <b>22-1</b> ; 355. <b>22-1</b> ; 356. <b>22-1</b> ; 357. <b>22-1</b> ; 358. <b>22-1</b> ; 359. <b>22-1</b> ; 360. <b>22-1</b> ; 361. <b>22-1</b> ; 362. <b>22-1</b> ; 363. <b>22-1</b> ; 364. <b>22-1</b> ; 365. <b>22-1</b> ; 366. <b>22-1</b> ; 367. <b>22-1</b> ; 368. <b>22-1</b> ; 369. <b>22-1</b> ; 370. <b>22-1</b> ; 371. <b>22-1</b> ; 372. <b>22-1</b> ; 373. <b>22-1</b> ; 374. <b>22-1</b> ; 375. <b>22-1</b> ; 376. <b>22-1</b> ; 377. <b>22-1</b> ; 378. <b>22-1</b> ; 379. <b>22-1</b> ; 380. <b>22-1</b> ; 381. <b>22-1</b> ; 382. <b>22-1</b> ; 383. <b>22-1</b> ; 384. <b>22-1</b> ; 385. <b>22-1</b> ; 386. <b>22-1</b> ; 387. <b>22-1</b> ; 388. <b>22-1</b> ; 389. <b>22-1</b> ; 390. <b>22-1</b> ; 391. <b>22-1</b> ; 392. <b>22-1</b> ; 393. <b>22-1</b> ; 394. <b>22-1</b> ; 395. <b>22-1</b> ; 396. <b>22-1</b> ; 397. <b>22-1</b> ; 398. <b>22-1</b> ; 399. <b>22-1</b> ; 400. <b>22-1</b> ; 401. <b>22-1</b> ; 402. <b>22-1</b> ; 403. <b>22-1</b> ; 404. <b>22-1</b> ; 405. <b>22-1</b> ; 406. <b>22-1</b> ; 407. <b>22-1</b> ; 408. <b>22-1</b> ; 409. <b>22-1</b> ; 410. <b>22-1</b> ; 411. <b>22-1</b> ; 412. <b>22-1</b> ; 413. <b>22-1</b> ; 414. <b>22-1</b> ; 415. <b>22-1</b> ; 416. <b>22-1</b> ; 417. <b>22-1</b> ; 418. <b>22-1</b> ; 419. <b>22-1</b> ; 420. <b>22-1</b> ; 421. <b>22-1</b> ; 422. <b>22-1</b> ; 423. <b>22-1</b> ; 424. <b>22-1</b> ; 425. <b>22-1</b> ; 426. <b>22-1</b> ; 427. <b>22-1</b> ; 428. <b>22-1</b> ; 429. <b>22-1</b> ; 430. <b>22-1</b> ; 431. <b>22-1</b> ; 432. <b>22-1</b> ; 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# A new start for the old Championship and 'Syd'

The amachronism that is the County Championship throws open its doors to the public once more this morning, and once more the public will be conspicuous only by their absence. While television continues to pump more and more money into the game in this country, newspapers devote more space to it and Test matches sell out faster than ever before, the County Championship plods on in its own peculiar way, defying the laws of good business. By this time next year, the

Championship may be unrecognisable from what we have known for the past 100 years. "There are some amber lights flashing over our game and we have to respond," says Lord MacLaurin, chairman of the newly established English Cricket Board. But for the moment everything is just about how it always was and Leicestershire, as champions, may find life uncomfortable in the opening weeks. Phil Simmons, such a pivotal figure last season, will not be available before the end of May, and they

are considering filling his all-rounder's boots with Neil Johnson, a South African. Should Leicestershire bat first today at Grace Road, they are likely to be confronted by David "Syd" Lawrence, playing his first Championship match in five years. Lawrence, now 33, has made a most quickly recovery after twice breaking his kneecap. Fingers will be crossed for a popular man as he charges in with that familiar all-in wrestling action of his. There are, as ever, a number

**Adam Szreter previews the opening games in the county cricket season**

of young players of whom great things are expected, and this summer they all seem to play for Surrey: their new captain Adam Hobbles, his baby brother Ben, England's latest fast bowling hope Alex Tudor, Mark Butcher, an opener already knocking on England's door. Surrey are so strong that, even without an overseas player, they can afford to leave the younger Hobbles and Alistair Brown out of their side to face Dermot Reeve's Somerset at The Oval today. Reeve's former team-mates at Warwickshire might be back to something like their fighting weight, now that Allan Donald has returned to spearhead the attack. Under their new captain, Tim Munton, they are the bookies' early favourites. Today's visit to Cardiff will be a strange way

to start for their latest acquisition, the left-handed bat David Hemp, who last played for Glamorgan. Kent and Derbyshire, fourth and second respectively last season, will both be disappointed with anything less than a winning start. Something may have to give at Canterbury and Kent, with a new captain and a new coach, will be hoping Paul Strang, their leg-spinning recruit from Zimbabwe, will make all the difference. It would be no surprise to find Essex or Lancashire leading the way in the first few weeks. Lancashire, especially, have the staff to make mince-meat of most opponents and David Boon would have hoped for an easier start to his Durham captaincy than a visit to Old Trafford.

At Chelmsford Essex entertain Hampshire, for whom the Australian Matthew Hayden makes his debut. With Hayden, Robin Smith and the promising Jason Loney in their first five, Hampshire should not want to be found wanting for runs this season. The Graeme Hick bandwagon has already started to roll, and it does not normally take long for the England selectors to climb aboard. A couple of early hundreds for Worcestershire should do the trick, and who better to start with than Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge? And so to Hove, where expectations are so low you almost expect to find Sussex have become a registered charity. Having lost six first-team players over the winter, finishing bottom may even prove beyond them. Northamptonshire take the first pot shots today.

## Higgins knuckles down to the grind of fame game

The first time John Higgins met Alex Higgins, the Hurricane left his mark. The young Scot had just lost to Jimmy White and to get a word of consolation from the great would have made a difference. Instead he got: "If you don't learn to play with side, you'll never be in my class." Those with a generous spirit would ascribe Higgins' words as a helpful hint or maybe a gentle nudge towards the toughest required to survive at snooker's top table. John Higgins will have none of it. "I thought he would come up and say 'bad luck, you played well'. He was one of my heroes, someone I looked up to, and he was slagging me off. I think he was wary because another Higgins was coming along."

**Guy Hodgson on the snooker player changing his tune as well as his cue**

versal shadow. Indeed, with Peter Ebdon already history he represents the most likely player to wrench the World Championship from Stephen Hendry's grasp. Last night, he was facing the world No.113, Graham Horne, after which Tony Drago and either Ken Doherty or Steve Davis are likely to provide the opposition. It is a path to the semi-finals that is well within the world No.2's compass and yet the expectation placed on his head is less than it has been for two years. In 1995 and 1996 he arrived as Hendry's great danger, but lost to Alan McManus (10-3) and Ronnie O'Sullivan (13-12). The pressure is on others. "I've left Sheffield twice feeling deeply disappointed and I don't think people expect me to win it now," he said. "The first time I just sat there watching Alan thinking all the things a fan does. You know 'this is where my heroes have played', or 'isn't the Crucible small'. My mind wasn't on the job at all."

and has earned more than £220,000 in prize-money. This on top of changing his cue at the turn of the year. Golfers might be fickle with their clubs, but snooker players regard the tool of their trade as an extension of their arms and change them with great reluctance. Higgins had owned his since he was a child, but years of adding his and replacing the tips had taken their toll and eventually the wrench had to be made. On the cue's first outing, Hendry was beaten. It was not the only change. "When you are losing first-round matches it hurts a lot," he said. "You dismiss it as everyone goes through a bad patch, but I felt that something was wrong. Changing the cue is probably one of the best things I've done. I was experimenting too much, having his chopped off or added on. It was silly. At the end of the day I wasn't putting in the length and quality of practice I should've been doing."



Eye on the table: John Higgins focuses on the world title

Photograph: Ailsport

## McManus fights back from brink

Alan McManus, the world No. 6, yesterday fought back from the brink of a first-round defeat at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, to beat his fellow Scot Billy Snaddon 10-9 in the deciding frame and reach the last 16 of the Embassy World Championship.

When he trailed 8-4 and 9-8 there appeared no way back for the 26-year-old Glaswegian. In a game lasting seven hours and seven minutes, McManus was never in front until he potted the

opening red of the deciding 19th frame. He went on to add a vital run of 34 and later fluked the final brown to leave Snaddon requiring snookers. Snaddon will be kicking himself for letting McManus escape. He began the match on Monday with a break of 131 during an early 3-0 lead. He finished the first session 5-3 up and continued to improve early on yesterday. Two frames turned the match in McManus's favour. A clearance of 65 from 58-0 down enabled him to win frame 13 and he just managed to take the 14th when Snaddon, clearing up, potted the yellow only to see the cue ball go in-off. McManus later missed the pink, but so too did Snaddon, and by eventually securing the frame 70-49 he was back in contention. Snaddon was to win only one more frame, the 17th, before nerves and McManus's relentless pressure finally finished him.

I've been at the night before I'd wake up next morning thinking maybe I can't be bothered going to the snooker hall. That's maybe the difference between me and him. He'd be at the club on a Sunday morning. "I'll have to work as hard. You have a few years after snooker when I can enjoy myself. I have to put that on the back burner." Since January, Higgins has

put in the hours on the practice table and if his first-round defeat at the British Open three weeks ago was not encouraging, it might be attributed to the emphasis he places on the World Championship. He knows, he says, that his best form would put Hendry within his range. "Stephen did not play that well last year and he still won," he said. "Which shows he's head and shoulders ahead of us."

I had the privilege of practising with him every day when I was younger and I know just how good he is. We're friends off the table, enemies on it. As for Alex Higgins, the word "friend" seems unlikely to ever apply. "I expect he would rather be in my position now," he said with a snort. If he wins the World Championship on 5 May you can safely assume John Higgins is right.

## Waugh attacks England

England's leading cricket players lack toughness and the hunger to succeed and do not combine well as a team, according to Mark Waugh, the Australian batsman. In comments likely to inflame old rivalries in the upcoming Ashes tour, Waugh predicted Australia would exploit those weaknesses to record an easy win in the six-Test series.

"I look at the England team on paper and think they are good players, but they aren't tough enough or hungry enough on the field," said Waugh in an interview in an Australian magazine published yesterday. "They don't play as a team, they worry about themselves. When you're out there, you don't feel you've got 11 guys against you," Waugh added. "Man for man they are not that far behind us, but they lack hunger."

Waugh, a veteran of 63 Tests, said England miss a quality spinner, dismissing Phil Tufnell as a threat. "Off-spinner Robert Croft is probably the best - I rate him highly. Phil Tufnell is back in the fray but I don't see him as a danger. I see him as a fairly weak sort of player who relies on you to make a mistake. He's not going to get you out." But there was praise for one English cricketer - Yorkshire's Darren Gough. "He's always trying 100 per cent, having a go, trying a bouncer, a slower ball. If he starts bowling well, he's a dangerous man because he can lift the rest of the team."

### SPORTING DIGEST

**Athletics**  
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**Four men in a boat**  
Redgrave and Pinsent  
take their partners, page 28

## sport

**The Glory Games**  
Old Trafford's Euro nights  
to remember, page 30

# Old Trafford has Dortmund at a disadvantage

**Football**  
GLENN MOORE

Borussia Dortmund will arrive at Old Trafford tonight with reason to be envious. It will not be the vast, towering stands which make them jealous, Dortmund have an impressive ground of their own. Nor will it be the glittering opposition, Dortmund have internationals in abundance.

What United have, and Dortmund lack, is the knowledge that barring a series of bizarre results they will be in next season's

Champions' League regardless of the result in this season's semi-final second leg tonight. United, in beating Liverpool on Saturday, all but confirmed their place as one of the elite eight automatic entrants. Dortmund also played their biggest rivals at the weekend but could only draw at home to Bayern Munich. They now trail Munich by six points with six matches to play. Nor can Dortmund even be sure of reaching the qualifying round as the Bundesliga's second-placed club. They are currently third, three points behind Bayer Leverkusen.

The difference is important for tonight's match will probably be decided by the subsequent reactions of the two sides. Will United, knowing they have a second chance next year, and having got as far as anyone expected this time, be able to relax and play their natural game as they did in thrashing Porto? Or will they lose their edge? Will Dortmund - who have a number of older players - have their resilience stiffened by the thought that this may be their last chance of glory? Or will that unsettle them?

Dortmund have one other

reason to envy United. The German champions, as in the first leg, have much greater injury problems. The talismanic Matthias Sammer, suspended the first time, is injured, as are fellow defenders Julio Cesar, Rene Schneider and Stefan Freund. Jürgen Kohler, who missed the first leg through injury, and the Ghanaian striker, Ibrahim Tanko, were both on the sick list last night and were left in Germany, although they both hope to fly into Manchester this morning. Even if Tanko is fit he will probably start on the bench, as both Karlheinz

Riedle and Stéphane Chapuisat are fit. United, having rested four players on Saturday, pick from an almost full squad. Only the suspended Roy Keane is unavailable, and the manager Alex Ferguson's concern is whether to start with Ryan Giggs, fit again, along with David May and Denis Irwin, and retain Ronny Johnsen at the back after his display against Liverpool.

But Dortmund do have something precious which United covet. They have Rene Trechok's first-leg goal. The goal means Dortmund need

only score once to make United score three times. United may have done that against Liverpool but it is hard, though not impossible, to imagine a defence marshalled by Kohler and Stefan Reuter defending as badly as Liverpool did. So United will have to be careful as they roar forward. One slip at the back and the dream of emulating the 1968 winners is over. But not too careful. "I don't think we'll be good at being really patient, trying to make sure they don't score and worrying about losing a goal," Ferguson said. "There has to be a high de-

gree of concentration and defensive discipline. But there has to be something about our game which reflects Manchester United and the ability of the team. "We want the level of performance we showed against Porto. We're capable of that. I keep saying to these players 'Reach your capabilities'. Dortmund are also unlikely to retreat into their shells, despite their advantage. "Our one goal won't be enough," their coach, Ottmar Hitzfeld, said. "We will need to come out and attack and I think we will need one or two more goals to get to the final."

Indeed, both teams are attacking by nature and the Old Trafford pitch is far better than Dortmund's - which affected the quality of the first match. United have the capacity to win but may come to rue the chances they missed a fortnight ago. Ferguson knows that United have been slow starters in Europe, but believes his young side have learnt valuable lessons. "It's not like going into the torture chamber, it's not that painful," he said. "They start to enjoy it." It remains to be seen whether their enjoyment will last until the final whistle.

## Brighton end the weeks of feuding

ALAN NIXON

Dick Knight took over as chairman of Brighton yesterday and immediately announced plans for a state-of-the-art 25,000-seat stadium in two years' time.

After 20 weeks of mediation, the Brighton dispute was finally resolved by a restructuring of the club. A new shareholding was agreed, allowing the Knight consortium and the present owners, including Bill Archer, to own a 49.5 per cent stake each, with the McAlpine director, Martin Perry, taking the remaining one per cent.

Paul Gascoigne has played down suggestions that Walter Smith is ready to bring the England midfielder's Rangers career to an end. Smith has accused Gascoigne of tarnishing the club's image with his off-field exploits. The manager's comment has fuelled speculation that he is ready to sell Gascoigne, whose contract has a year to run, in the summer.

However, Gascoigne, who has been left out of England's squad for next week's World Cup qualifier against Georgia, said: "I don't know what all the fuss is about. I've spoken to Walter and everything is brand new." But not his contact, presumably.

Jack Walker, the owner of Blackburn Rovers, has put a block on Graeme Le Saux leaving the club and moving to Ar-

senal. Walker is digging in his heels over the unsettled left-back who was brought back into the Rovers side against Sheffield Wednesday last night.

Le Saux was dropped last week and trained with the reserves after falling out with Rovers' caretaker manager, Tony Parkes. However, Walker has insisted that the England defender cannot go despite interest from Arsenal.

Jorge Cadete, Celtic's Portuguese striker, has escaped with a reprimand from the Scottish Football Association after he threw his jersey into the crowd at the end of a league match with Dunfermline last month. The SFA disciplinary committee told him of their "extreme displeasure" at his disregard of an instruction from police not to stir up the fans.

Scotland's coach, Craig Brown, is likely to witness at close hand the man who has recently gained such a reputation in England for his man-marking skills. His Swedish counterpart, Tommy Svensson, has recalled Leicester's Pontus Karmark to his squad for the first time in 18 months for the 30 April World Cup qualifier between the two in Gothenburg. Svensson was no doubt impressed by the close-marking job Karmark did on Middlesbrough's Brazilian inspiration, Juninho, in the Coca-Cola Cup final and the replay. Swedish squad, Digest, page 31



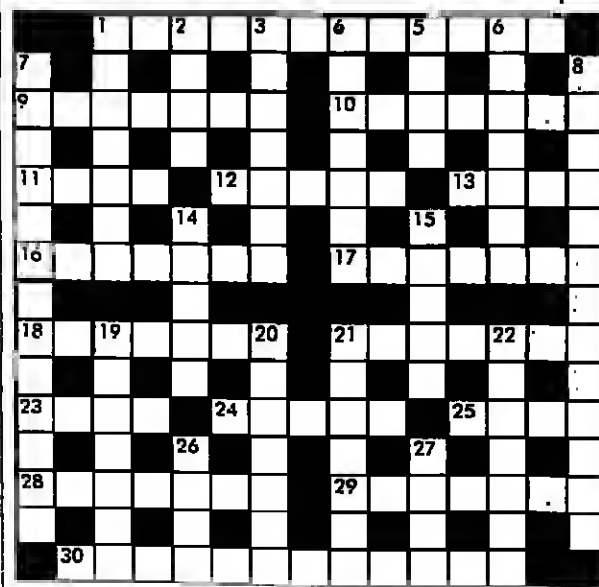
In the groove: Pakistan's Saqlain Mushtaq leans into his drive during his innings of 58 on the fourth day of the first Test against Sri Lanka in Colombo. The tourists were all out for 378 in reply to Sri Lanka's first-innings total of 330. Photograph: AP

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No 3289, Wednesday 23 April

By Aquila

Tuesday's Solution



**EDUCATED GUESSES**  
A T A R B E L U A  
S I C K E A P A B E A M  
S H V I P N L U  
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W H E E L E R D E A T E R

### ACROSS

- 1 Best prayer in unorthodox church (12)
- 9 Hot-rod driver, once common in shipyards (7)
- 11 Not well, having broken a leg under the counter (7)
- 12 Old and new (4)
- 13 Thrills in punts? (5)
- 15 Wine among the last imported (4)
- 16 In favour of melody from Kismet? (7)
- 17 One is put into orbit for a brighter outlook (7)
- 18 Delivery sales slip (7)
- 21 Sad for musicians, having no head for sherry (7)
- 23 Can of beer down under subway (4)
- 24 Strength of foreign wines? (5)

### DOWN

- 2 In this state, university headgear is back to front (4)
- 3 One of those eastern dishes sometimes preferred to sultanas? (7)
- 29 Vocabulary of Roman law figure (7)
- 30 Go mad in such a store? (12)
- 1 Golfer turning toper, perhaps, having got a four? (7)
- 2 Common grub found among wheat-stalks (4)
- 3 End of measure to decipher linear B (3-4)
- 5 Slow sort of charge to deceive the French? (7)
- 5 Bank of river on cathedral city (4)

### IMPOSING AMERICAN GOLF CENTRE? (7)

- 7 Escalation in favour of time-share (13)
- 8 Half the doings disguised in this skill? (7,2,4)
- 14 Does this game bird have cold feet? (5)
- 15 I need the end of good to turn me on (5)
- 19 American banknotes used in the Savoy? (7)
- 20 Brake closely-packed, leaving son behind (7)
- 21 Rest upon accomplished fiction (7)
- 22 Scotch governor a learner when producing light (7)
- 26 Maggie with abnormal appetite (4)
- 27 Former wife, with sex appeal, giving vent (4)

## Setback for Becker

**Tennis**

Boris Becker made an inauspicious start to his clay-court season when he lost in the first round of the Monte Carlo Open yesterday. The former Wimbledon champion was beaten 1-6, 6-3, 7-6 by Italy's Renzo Furlan.

Back on clay for the first time in a season so far marred by injuries, Becker made a good start but soon found it difficult adapting to the slow surface and bowed out in just over two hours.

The loss may not be a surprise since Becker, ranked 12th in the world, only resumed playing in Tokyo last week after a two-month break because of tendinitis. He had also complained of thigh pains in Tokyo. But the defeat, in only his sixth match this year, was a further setback for the German, who has lost three finals in Monte Carlo.

"He was very good in the first set, especially at the net. And then he started playing poorly and I realised I only needed to play solid tennis," Furlan, ranked 65 in the world, said. "It's a big disappointment because I was so close to a win but to be so close when I served so poorly was a surprise," Becker said.

Two other players whose season has been hampered by injury are Britain's Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski. They were back on the practice courts at Queen's Club, London, yesterday searching for full fitness.

Henman, who last played in the Lipton Championships in Key Biscayne five weeks ago when he lost to Spanish qualifier Julian Alonso, has remained at No 15 in the world, although several of his closest rivals have narrowed the points gap. Rusedski has played just two matches in two comeback attempts since hurting his wrist in the San

Jose final against Pete Sampras in February, but he has dropped only four places, from 36 to 40.

Arthroscopic surgery appears to have healed Henman's right elbow, and he felt no pain yesterday. "There was no pain whatsoever, which is a pleasing sign," he said.

Now he will continue to practise regularly, although he does not intend to play in any tournaments until the Italian Open in Rome in mid-May. Rusedski was hoping to get back earlier than Rome but is still undecided about his plans.

While Henman and Rusedski are limbering up again, Andrew Richardson, the Lincolnshire left-hander, has gone up 28 places in the world rankings from 262 to 234.

This follows his exploits in the ATP Tour event in Tokyo last week when he came through the qualifying rounds and then beat Sweden's Tomas Nydahl in the first round of the main draw.

## Woods proud to be 'Cablinasian'

**Golf**

MARY DEJEVSKY  
reports from Washington

Tiger Woods, the new darling of the US media following his record victory in the US Masters 10 days ago, is using his new-found celebrity to do good so gently - his overnight elevation to black sporting icon.

Asked by the almost equally popular black television interviewer, Oprah Winfrey, whether it bothered him to be called "African-American" - the current politically correct term for black people in America - Woods replied: "It does... I'm just who I am, whoever you see in front of you."

He said that as a child, he

coined a term, "Cablinasian" to describe his background, a blend of Caucasian, black, Indian and Asian. His father is black and his mother Thai, but Woods is actually one quarter black, one quarter Thai, one quarter Chinese, one-eighth white and one-eighth Native American Indian. He has taken his mother's religion, Buddhism.

That he was immediately hailed as the first "black" Masters champion reflects the US craving to find black success stories. But it has also prompted comment: why, asked one letter-writer to a major newspaper, was Woods not hailed as the first "Asian" Masters victor?

And in an incident that showed what black golfers might be up against on the professional

circuit, one of America's best-known golf personalities, Fuzzy Zoeller, was forced to apologise on national television for off-hand remarks he had made about Woods to a reporter from the news channel CNN, which were not broadcast at the time.

Zoeller had called Woods "that little boy" and said jokingly that he hoped he would not order fried chicken for the champions' dinner next year. Choosing the menu is the prerogative of the reigning champion and fried chicken is considered the staple food of poor black Southerners.

Clearly embarrassed, Zoeller apologised; he said that everyone on the circuit knew him as a joker and his remarks were not intended to be "racially derogatory".

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